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THE MONTH IN MUSIC

The recordings, concerts, broadcasts and websites exciting us this January

ONLINE **Looking back**

What were the big classical news stories of 2016? From the woes of English National Opera to happier tales including legendary film score composer Ennio Morricone's first Oscar, we take a look back over the year in a special feature on the *BBC Music Magazine* website. Visit classical-music.com/2016

SUSSIE AHLBURG

ON DISC **Rare Ralph**

Unheard Vaughan Williams? Surprising as it might seem, there are still discoveries to be made when it comes to the British composer. Two new discs from Albion Records reveal some vocal rarities, including the *Three Nocturnes*. The line-up of soloists includes Roderick Williams and Mary Bevan. *See p70*

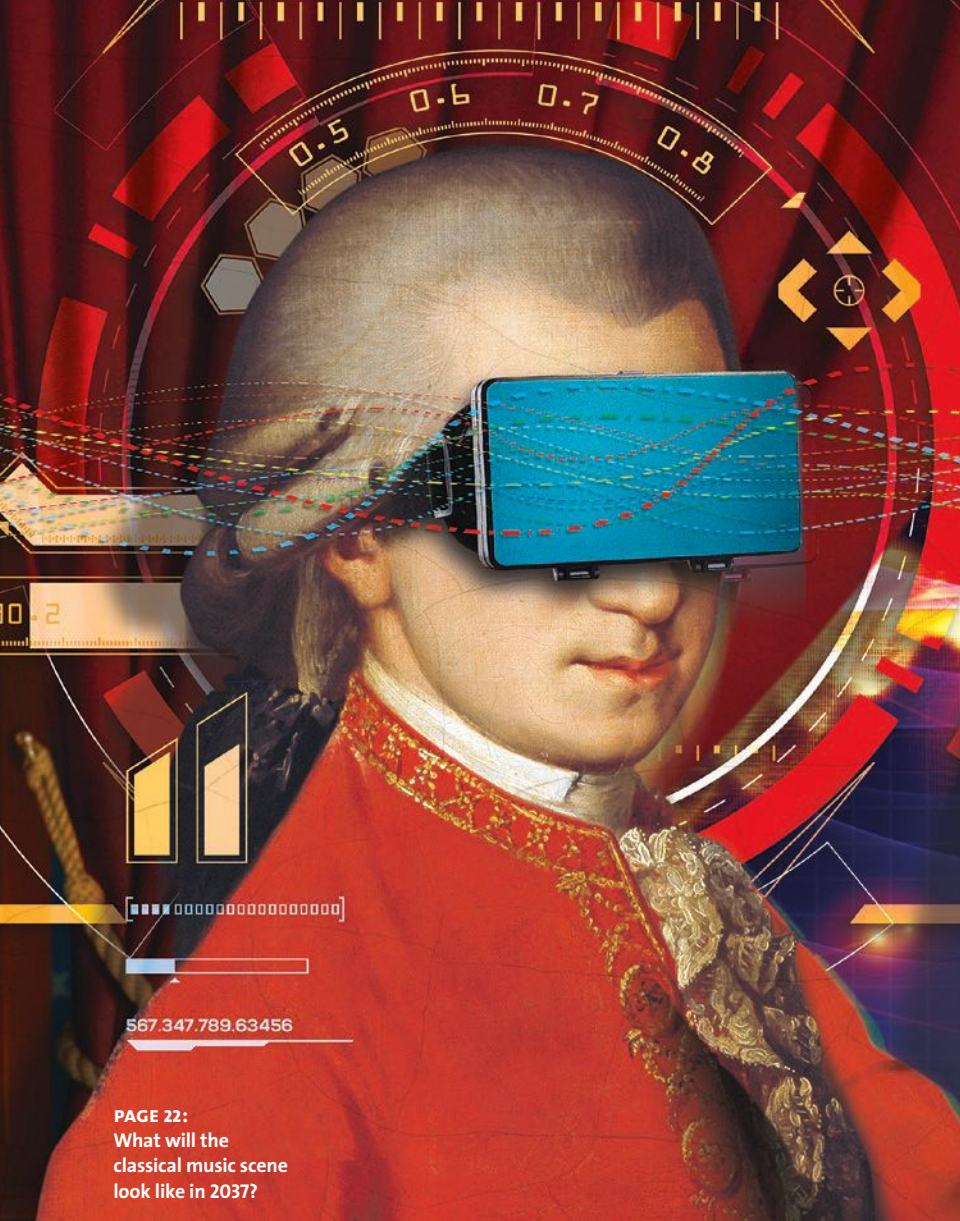
ON AIR **Forward thinkers**

BBC Radio 3 begins 2017 with a celebration of the Second Viennese School. With Schoenberg as *Composer of the Week*, the week-long *Breaking Free* season looks at how the Austrian and his followers took on established notions of tonality. Included along the way is Berg's *Wozzeck* from the Royal Opera House. *See p90*

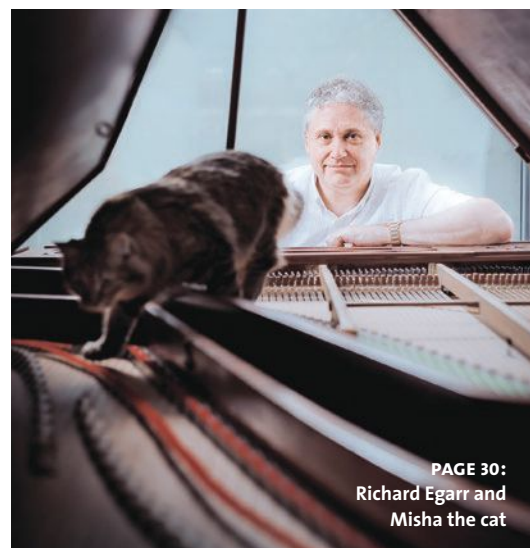
ON STAGE **Exeter return**

The fire that destroyed Exeter's Royal Clarence Hotel in October also led to the cancellation of a cathedral concert to commemorate Two Moors Festival co-founder John Adie. Thankfully, a new date has been found, and violinist Alina Ibragimova (right) will be joining the Orchestra of the Swan on 21 January. *See p87*





PAGE 22:
What will the
classical music scene
look like in 2037?



PAGE 30:
Richard Egarr and
Misha the cat



PAGE 42:
We meet Zuzana
Růžicková in Prague

CONTENTS

EVERY MONTH

3 A Month in Music

What we're looking forward to this January

6 Letters

Beatrice Harrison's beasts; the last Bach?

10 The Full Score

Edinburgh's new concert hall; Stravinsky's *Funeral Song* brought back from the dead; Mahler Symphony score sells for £4.5m

21 Richard Morrison

What does 2017 hold for classical music?

46 Musical Destinations

Rebecca Franks pays a visit to an exciting new concert venue in the Belgian city of Antwerp

48 Composer of the Month

Gerald Larner on why Claude Debussy resented being known as an Impressionist

52 Building a Library

Daniel Jaffé on the very best recordings of Rimsky-Korsakov's tone poem *Sheherazade*

86 Live Events

The best concerts and opera this month

90 Radio & TV listings

BBC Radio 3 schedule and TV highlights

94 Crossword and Quiz

Time to stretch those musical brain cells

96 Music that Changed Me

Bergen Philharmonic conductor Edward Gardner

FEATURES

22 The Future of Music

What will the classical music scene look like a generation or so from now? We find out...

30 James Naughtie meets...

Academy of Ancient Music's Richard Egarr

34 The Story of Stereo

Simon Heighes charts a fascinating history

38 19th-century Opera Singers

Anna Maria Barry on the adventures and antics of celebrated British tenors and basses

42 Zuzana Růžicková

Jessica Duchon meets the Czech harpsichordist who survived three Nazi concentration camps

THIS MONTH'S CONTRIBUTORS

Anna Maria Barry
Writer and academic



'I've spent the last four years researching male opera singers of the 19th century for my PhD. It's been a real adventure finding out about these colourful men, who I've tracked down traces of in archives around the world.' Page 38

Gerald Larner
Writer and biographer



'One of the joys of writing about Debussy is that it offers the perfect excuse for getting lost in the always fascinating complete *Correspondance* (1872-1918) published (in French) by Gallimard in 2005.' Page 48

Daniel Jaffé
Journalist and author



'Rimsky-Korsakov's *Sheherazade* has been part of me from a very young age, and it has been wonderful to get to know it all the better through several recordings, making some surprising discoveries along the way.' Page 52

JANUARY REVIEWS

The important new recordings, DVDs and books reviewed



56 Recording of the Month *Mozart* Mass in C minor

- 58 Orchestral
- 60 Concerto
- 64 Opera
- 68 Choral & Song
- 72 Chamber
- 77 Instrumental
- 80 Brief Notes
- 82 Jazz
- 84 Books 85 Audio

Welcome



Twenty years ago, almost to the day, I clocked off for good from Cardiff's Virgin Megastore. Serving customers in its mammoth classical music section, the largest of any record store outside London, I got my first taste of the record industry, and

introduced hundreds of (hopefully) happy punters to music they would otherwise have never listened to. Today, record stores – if you're lucky enough to have one near you – are smaller, leaner affairs, but no less valuable in their expertise, enthusiasm and advice.

But how the scene has changed in two decades. I remember the shop having a decent MiniDisc section, a format we all assumed would last rather longer than it did. But the humble CD (35 years old and counting) has clung on heroically, digital streaming points the way and vinyl, ridiculously cumbersome and so easy to scratch, has made

We still mumble about the lack of young people at concerts

a surprise comeback. But what else has changed? We still mumble about the lack of young people at concerts (when will we ever understand that the young have no time and no money?) and concerts are still presented in the same way they were back in the 1990s. But why should they be any different? After all, there are only so many ways you can gather a couple of thousand people together to listen to music.

Yet today it feels as if we're at last on the cusp of significant change. The internet has given us undreamed-of access to myriad art forms, from online libraries to galleries, poetry to theatre, with the result that concert goers are demanding more than a simple presentation of a classical music programme. As they make increasing connections between art, literature and music, so concerts need to adapt. We're at the start of that particular journey, and our interviewees in our special feature have some fascinating and revealing things to say. See p22.

And if technology is becoming sophisticated and subtle enough to revolutionise classical music in ways we could never have imagined, it's somewhat ironic that the standard audio format, stereo, is over 85 years old! (p34).

Oliver Condry

Oliver Condry Editor

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LETTERS

Write to: The editor, *BBC Music Magazine*, Tower House,
Fairfax Street, Bristol, BS1 3BN or email: music@classical-music.com

LETTER OF THE MONTH



HAPPY SNAP: cellist Beatrice Harrison at Oxted with her crocodiles, 1929

CARNIVAL OF THE ANIMALS

The splendid picture of Beatrice Harrison with her cello at home in Oxley (December) may cause confusion, as the family home was in fact in Oxted on the Surrey and Kent border. Many eminent musicians visited the family, and it was there that the BBC recorded Beatrice accompanying the local nightingales. The pianist Gerald Moore, a regular visitor, noted in his book *Am I Too Loud?* the family menagerie of 18 dogs, exotic birds, and two baby crocodiles in a tank in the dining room.

The property still remains, and the present owner has been moved to restore the music room where, on this year's centenary of the Battle of the Somme, a recital was held in memory of George Butterworth, killed in the battle. There was an appreciative audience for what was, for some, a deeply nostalgic occasion. One hopes for more recitals in these iconic surroundings.
Jack Gill, Warlingham, Surrey



Every month the editor will award a **SolarDAB 2 Roberts radio** (retail value £80 – see www.robertsradio.co.uk) to the writer of the best letter received. The editor reserves the right to shorten letters for publication.

INSPIRED BY AUNTIE

The feature *'In the beginning...'* (October) presented a fascinating brief history of the origins of the BBC. Here in the US, broadcasting of serious music and literature on radio has become a rarity. Thanks to internet radio, I have access to BBC Radio 3 and 4 and enjoy the incredible array of musical performances from every period of history, written by composers of all nationalities. I am staggered year-round by the sheer quantity of BBC's broadcasting of superb 'live' musical presentations.

The BBC has educated me for years, and I feel gratitude for my exposure to such a wonderful array of intellectual and emotional stimulation. After all, what is education if not the possibility of encountering new and different ideas and conceptions of reality?
Michael D Moore, Connecticut, US

WRONG ERA

I must protest your reference to Jascha Heifetz as a 'Soviet violinist'. In no way could he be properly referenced as such. Heifetz was born in Lithuania in January 1901 (before a Soviet state was even thought of) and the world-famous violinist and his family left Russia permanently for the US in 1917 during the war.
C Mankiewicz, via email

LAST OF THE LINE?

The true 'end of the Bach music dynasty' (December) was not the painter Johann Sebastian Bach Junior, but another Bach grandson, Wilhelm Friedrich Ernst Bach (1759-1845). Son of JCF Bach, and Kapellmeister to Friedrich Wilhelm II of Prussia

from 1788 to 1811, WFE Bach was guest of honour when Mendelssohn unveiled the Bach Monument in Leipzig on 23 April 1843. Schumann later described him as 'a very agile old gentleman of 84 years with snow-white hair and expressive features'.

His daughter, Carolina Augusta Wilhelmine Bach (not a composer), who died in 1871, was the last direct descendant of Johann Sebastian to bear the name Bach.

John Fowler, Illinois, US

BACH FOR MORE

Johann Ludwig Bach (1667-1731) missed out on a mention in your December issue. Not much of his music survives but, judging from a *Trauermusik* dated 1724 composed at the Court at Meiningen, he was clearly an inventive and profound composer, as can be heard in a recording by the Berlin Academy of Early Music on Harmonia Mundi.

Rex Billingham, via email

THE EDITOR REPLIES

Many thanks for your feedback about various members of the remarkably talented Bach family. It is a subject we hope to explore further in future issues.

MODERN OUTLOOK

One thing I appreciate about *BBC Music Magazine* is the window it provides into contemporary classical music. Just finding out basic information about contemporary composers, works and styles can be daunting, but with some simple searching each issue reveals a fresh batch of recent composers and works. A little sleuth work on YouTube can then

give an idea of how this fantastic modern music sounds.

Bob Rydzewski, California, US

BAND OF BROTHERS

I was awestruck by the scholarship in your *Incredible Talents* piece (Christmas issue). However, there is one notable omission, a member of a famous musical family...

All musicians know Joseph Haydn, many know his brother Michael Haydn, but few know about the third brother. Johann Evangelist Haydn had a fine tenor voice but, with learning difficulties, was unable to support himself; he became an unpaid tenor at the Esterhazy court. But completely lost to history is the fourth brother, Johann Joseph Haydn, who was not only a musician but also a merchant and explorer. He finally settled in Kashmir, where he so wholeheartedly assumed the local culture and way of life that he became known as Haydn Sikh. See the definitive, but difficult to find, biography, *The Hidden Haydn Found*, by the Kashmiri scholar, Djawanna Singh.

Peter Young, Cheltenham

THE EDITOR REPLIES

Hmmm... right! What other 'lesser-known' composers are yet to be discovered, we wonder?

HEAVENLY SOUNDS

I have been a thrilled and happy subscriber since the early 1990s. We often visit England to photograph the churches and cathedrals, and on these trips we always seek out the live music: evensong in Hexham (all girls!), a service in Wells, or an organ concert in Exeter. We have no possibility of such riches living here in Alabama. Our subscription to *BBC Music Magazine* is our best way to continually receive CDs that help us connect to the rich heritage of classical music that we love so much. Keep it up and don't change a thing. You have no idea how your efforts enrich our lives.

David Cummings Alabama, US



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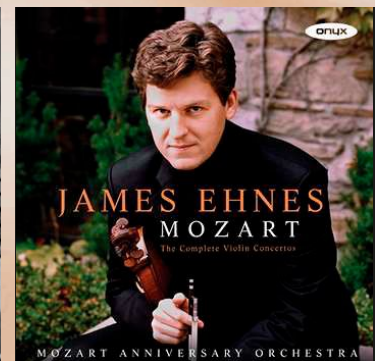
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(ONYX4162)



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Oleg Kagan, Musica Nostalgica
Leonard Elschenbroich,
Petr Limonov
(ONYX4180)



Mozart Violin Concertos 1-5 etc
James Ehnes violin
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(reissue)
(ONYX4164)

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The Full Score

OUR PICK OF THE MONTH'S NEWS, VIEWS AND INTERVIEWS

Edinburgh beats London to new hall

Scottish Chamber Orchestra announces plans for a state-of-the-art new home



The Scottish Chamber Orchestra (SCO) has revealed plans for a new home in the centre of Edinburgh, just as the future of London's new concert hall is thrown into doubt.

Discussions are currently in progress over the construction of a state-of-the-art centre on St Andrew Square that, in addition to a 1,000-seat auditorium, would also house rehearsal, recital and recording facilities. As well as providing a base for the SCO, the centre, whose development and funding is being managed by a new organisation called the International Music and Performing Arts Charitable Trust (IMPACT Scotland), would also provide a hub for the area's wider musical and educational activities.

'We hope to be in the new centre by 2020,' says SCO chief executive Gavin Reid. 'IMPACT Scotland will soon be inviting expressions of interest from architect-led design teams, and then we move onto the design stage, fundraising and planning. And then we build. Yes, it will be a wonderful home for the SCO, but it will also be a fantastic space for performers of all sorts of musical styles.'

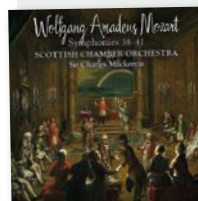
The SCO, widely regarded as one of the finest ensembles of its size in the world, currently plays the bulk of its concerts in the Scottish capital across two venues. This, says Reid, often involves a certain amount of compromise when it comes to programmes: 'Our audiences have always been very fond of Queen's Hall, but there

are times when we'd like its capacity – and stage – to be a little bigger. The alternative in Edinburgh is Usher Hall which seats 2,200 people and is designed for symphony orchestras. Moving would allow us to expand our repertoire in one single, flexible hall.'

Should everything go ahead, the new centre would give Edinburgh a facility to match Glasgow's admired City Halls. 'If both cities have world-class mid-scale concert venues that inspire and engage people, that can only be good for all of us,' says Reid. 'It's good for the arts sector, it's good for audiences, it's good for participants and it's good for Scotland.'

Scottish Chamber Orchestra

A quick guide



Founded in 1974, the SCO is a professional ensemble specialising in smaller-scale orchestral repertoire. Based

in Edinburgh, it tours regularly both across Scotland's Highlands and Islands and across the UK. It has commissioned over 100 new works in its lifetime.

Robin Ticciati has been its principal conductor since 2009. His predecessors include Jukka-Pekka Saraste, Ivor Bolton and Joseph Swensen.

Today, the SCO records mainly for Linn Records. Their recording of Mozart's Symphonies Nos 38-41, conducted by Sir Charles Mackerras (pictured above), won the BBC Music Magazine Recording of the Year Award in 2009.

Stravinsky's lost Funeral Song is heard again

Orchestral work written in memory of Rimsky-Korsakov receives its first performance in 107 years

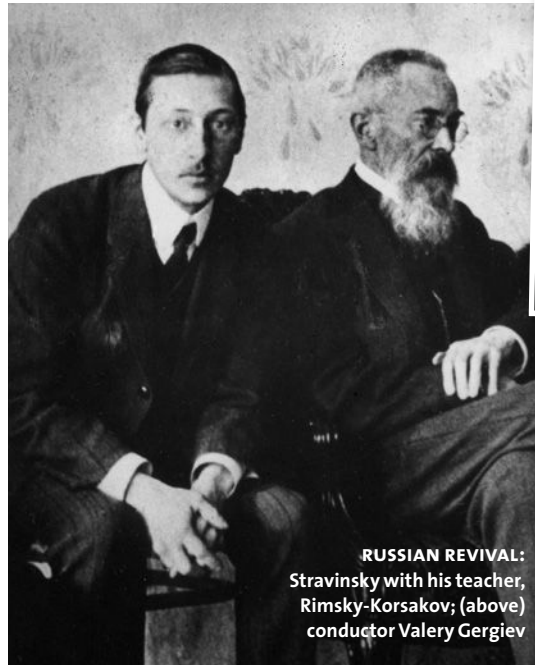
An orchestral work by Stravinsky that was once thought to have been lost during the upheaval of the Russian Revolution has enjoyed its first performance in over 107 years.

On 2 December in St Petersburg, Valery Gergiev conducted the Mariinsky Orchestra in *Funeral Song*, a 12-minute piece that Stravinsky wrote in 1909

'I would be curious myself to see what I was composing just before *The Firebird*'

in memory of his late teacher, Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov. It's a work that gives an invaluable insight into the young composer's creative development.

An insight, in fact, that Stravinsky himself would have appreciated – later in his life, he expressed regret that he had become separated from the score when he left Russia in the aftermath of the Revolution, writing that 'the orchestral



RUSSIAN REVIVAL: Stravinsky with his teacher, Rimsky-Korsakov; (above) conductor Valery Gergiev



parts must have been preserved in one of the St Petersburg orchestral libraries; I wish someone in Leningrad would look for the parts, for I would be curious myself to see what I was

composing just before *The Firebird*.'

In spring 2015, 44 years after his death, his wishes were at last met when a set of orchestral parts for *Funeral Song* were discovered in a back room during stock relocation at the St Petersburg Rimsky-Korsakov State Conservatory library.

The work is also to get its UK premiere when, on 19 February, it will be played by the Philharmonia under Esa-Pekka Salonen at the Royal Festival Hall. It will be broadcast later on BBC Radio 3.

RISING STAR Great artists of tomorrow

Luca Buratto
pianist

The final of the Honens Piano Competition in Calgary, Canada, on 8 September 2015 was something of a Prokofiev piano concerto shoot-off. Taking the stage that evening were Henry Kramer, who performed the Second Concerto, and Luca Buratto and Artem Yasynskyy, who both played the Third. Buratto emerged victorious.

Life has not been quite the same since for the Italian, now 23. 'When you win an important competition, everyone starts to recognise you more,' he says, 'and being known gives you the freedom to explore more in terms of repertoire. You also get big support from the competition itself, which provides concert engagements and looks after small things such as travel, visas and so on. On the other hand, you have to be always on top of your game, as people will be checking up to see if the victory was an accident!'

'Being known gives you the freedom to explore more repertoire'

Importantly, the Honens isn't just about one big performance in the company of a symphony orchestra, as the participants are accumulatively assessed over two weeks in solo and chamber recitals and also accompanying singers – Buratto's performances over the fortnight can be heard on a CD produced by the competition's own label. As part of Buratto's prize, he has also had the chance to record a disc of Schumann

solo piano works for the Hyperion label, to be released in June. Concert engagements, meanwhile, include his Wigmore Hall debut in the Honens Prize

Laureate Recital at the end of this month.

In keeping with the Honens ethos, Buratto, who hails from Milan, is keen to master a wide repertoire. Much of it is well-known, but there is also one decidedly less familiar composer he is keen to champion. 'Renzo Massarani was my great-grandfather,' he explains. 'He was a student of Respighi with a big career ahead of him. But after the Racial Laws of 1938, he decided as a Jew to emigrate to Brazil and, in his disgust,



FAMILY HISTORY: Buratto's great-grandfather was a distinguished composer

gave up composing and tried to have previous works destroyed. Some works, including a few piano pieces, were published and have survived, thankfully. And so, if there is an opportunity to fit his music into a performance, I will do it.'

Interview by Jeremy Pound; Luca Buratto plays at Wigmore Hall, London on 22 January

THE OFFICIAL CLASSICAL CHART

The UK's best-selling specialist classical releases

Chart for week ending 18 November 2016



1 The Lost Songs of St Kilda
Trevor Morrison (piano); Scottish FO/
James MacMillan Decca 481 2795
The recovered music of an abandoned Scottish
archipelago still remains at the top of the chart



2 Wiseman The Musical Zodiac
National Symphony Orchestra/Debbie
Wiseman Classic FM CFMD46
From Aries to Pisces, Wiseman's 12-movement
orchestral work takes us through every star sign



**3 Remembrance: Duruflé, Tavener, Elgar
et al** Clare College Choir, Cambridge/
Graham Ross Harmonia Mundi HMU907654
A stunningly performed remembrance-themed
disc is capped by Duruflé's exquisite Requiem



4 JS Bach The French Suites
Murray Perahia (piano)
Deutsche Grammophon 479 6565
The brilliant pianist's first disc for the DG label
was our Christmas issue Recording of the Month



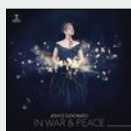
**5 Christmas with Septura: Arrangements
for brass septet**
Septura Naxos 8.573719
From Bach and Handel to Warlock and Darke,
brass music has never sounded so festive



**6 Jubilo: works by Fasch, Corelli, Torelli and
Bach** Alison Balsom (trumpet); Academy
of Ancient Music/Pavlo Beznosiuk
Warner Classics 9029592465
More festive brass, this time from Alison Balsom



7 Wagner Die Walküre
Matthias Goerne, Michelle DeYoung
et al; Hong Kong Philharmonic/Jaap van
Zweden Naxos 8.660394-97
Hong Kong's Ring cycle reaches its second stage



**8 In War and Peace: Handel, Jommelli, Leo,
Monteverdi and Purcell**
Joyce DiDonato (mezzo-soprano)
Erato 9029592846
A finely crafted recital from the mighty mezzo



**9 Winter: Works by Alexander, Arnolds,
Bingham, Dale, Holst, Pärt, Pott,
Praetorius, Rachmaninov and Vasks**
Voces8 Decca 483 0968
A sublimely atmospheric seasonal recording



10 Song of the Nativity
The Sixteen/Harry Christophers
Coro COR16146
A delightful blend of ancient and modern, as The
Sixteen carries on its tradition of Xmas excellence



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DOUBLE DECCA BUS:
Sheku Kanneh-Mason sets
off with Shostakovich

Shostakovich from Sheku

Sheku Kanneh-Mason, winner of BBC Young Musician 2016, has signed a record deal with Decca Classics. His performance of Shostakovich's Cello Concerto No. 1 won him the competition final, with the judges describing it as 'electrifying, sincere and moving'. Aptly, it's the first work he'll record for Decca, next year. Kanneh-Mason, who is 17, studies both at school in Nottingham and at London's Royal Academy of Music, and Decca Classics aims to nurture his talent as his professional career begins. The label is already home to two other acclaimed BBC Young Musician finalists, pianist Benjamin Grosvenor and violinist Nicola Benedetti.

Brave new Brahms

Sir Simon Rattle and the Berlin Philharmonic have recorded Brahms's Symphonies for a limited edition vinyl box-set on the orchestra's own label. Recorded direct to disc – so straight from a single pair of stereo microphones to the mixing desk to the vinyl cutting head – the aim is to give the listeners the closest possible experience to the live concerts, which took place in September 2014. 'It's maybe the most honest recorded sound I've heard with the orchestra,' says Rattle. 'We found it a terrifying and satisfying experience in equal measure.' The set has six vinyl records, and 1833 copies have been made – the number chosen to match the year of Brahms's birth.

At the piano with Ralph

Mark Bebbington has recorded the complete piano music of Vaughan Williams, for Somm Recordings. The British composer didn't write an awful lot for piano – about a disc's worth of music – although he often used the instrument to help with his composing. This recording includes the two-piano version of his ever-popular *Fantasia on a Theme of Thomas Tallis* and the Introduction and Fugue, which springs from the same soundworld as his Sixth Symphony. There's a set of *Six Little Teaching Pieces*, as well as the original piano version of what became the *Charterhouse Suite* for strings. Three miniatures include VW's *Bach Choral and Chorale Prelude* transcription and, says Bebbington, 'show how deeply Vaughan Williams had absorbed the counterpoint of JS Bach alongside the "new" music of Ravel and Debussy'.



REWIND Artists talk about their past recordings



THIS MONTH

Joanna MacGregor pianist

British pianist Joanna MacGregor has made over 30 solo recordings, in repertoire ranging from Bach and Scarlatti to Jazz and John Cage. She is currently artistic director of the Dartington International Summer School, which will run from 29 July – 26 August 2017.

My finest moment

Messiaen *Vingt Regards sur l'enfant-Jésus*

Joanna MacGregor (piano)
SoundCircus BL1393693 (digital) (1996)
Recording this piece was a bit like scaling Mount Everest – the piece is so technically and spiritually huge and, at two hours 20 minutes, the length of it is enormous. It was also one of the first recordings I made at Snape Maltings in Aldeburgh. It's quite a big hall for a solo piano, but the space fits the huge, transcendental nature of the piece. It's a hell of a thing to get through – it's got a kind of wild Lisztian, crazy mathematical grandeur. I remember it was winter, so it was very dark all the time, and the



beams were creaking and groaning. Quite often we'd do a take and it would be really good, but we'd have to stop and wait for the wind to die down a bit! That slightly *Wuthering Heights* feeling of the wind whipping across the marshes was a rather remarkable and romantic atmosphere in which to make music. I had a great producer

in James Mallinson, who was tremendously patient, but also pushed me quite hard.

My fondest memory

Deep River

Joanna MacGregor (piano), Andy Sheppard (saxophone)

Sound Circus SC 3614591307935 (2005)

It's always an absolute pleasure to work with Andy Sheppard. He's the most warm, wonderful, generous musician, and an absolutely brilliant



collaborator. We'd just done the Moondog album with the Britten Sinfonia, which was a huge, ambitious project, with a cast of thousands playing noisy, dancy, jumpy music. So I said to Andy,

'Let's do something quiet!' *Deep River* ended up being far from quiet. Around this time, I'd quite often jump on a plane to Memphis, drive down to Mississippi, and maybe end up in New Orleans. I've got a lot of gospel and blues in my background, and I wanted to record something to reflect that. Slowly we put together this album of music that ranges from traditional gospel music to songs by Tom Waits and Bob Dylan, Johnny Cash and Nick Cave. I actually produced this album myself – every decision we made was down to me. It was a great experience, and we've continued to play a lot of the material on this album.

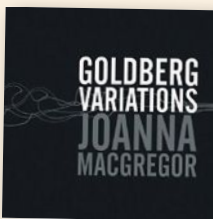
I'd like another go at...

JS Bach *Goldberg Variations*

Joanna MacGregor (piano)

Sound Circus 3610159954559 (2010)

Once you start playing the *Goldberg Variations*, you can't stop. There's no way you can ever say: 'that's it, that's as far as I can get with that piece'. It just doesn't work like that. I really



enjoyed making my first recording of the variations, at the Mozarteum in Salzburg, which has this Steinway with a slightly golden, old-fashioned sound that I'd totally fallen in love with. I rather gravitate towards pianos that have soul, which often means they are old and difficult. We spent three days in this absolutely wonderful hall grappling with probably one of the hardest pieces of music ever written for keyboard. There were so many decisions to make, and there are so many different ways of playing it. That's why I think one day I might try it again.

STUDIOSECRETS

We reveal who's recording what, and where



CHOPIN TIME: pianist Cédric Tiberghien

Cédric Tiberghien has been recording Chopin at Henry Wood Hall in London. The French pianist's recital, for Hyperion, brings together the 24 Preludes and two of the composer's works in B flat minor – the Second Piano Sonata and Second *Scherzo*.

Conductor **Pablo Heras Casado**'s new recording for Harmonia Mundi is an all-Bartók affair. He conducts the Munich Philharmonic in the Concerto for Orchestra, and is joined by Javier Perianes for the Third Piano Concerto.

Juanjo Mena and the BBC Philharmonic have reached the third volume of their Ginastera series. Recorded in Manchester, there's a piano theme with Xiayin Wang appearing as the soloist in the First Piano Concerto and *Concierto Argentino*. The *Variaciones Concertantes* for chamber orchestra complete the picture.

Howard Skempton's *Rime of the Ancient Mariner* was premiered in autumn 2015 by **Roderick Williams** and the Birmingham Contemporary Music Group (BCMG). They've now recorded it for NMC, for a recording that also features Skempton's *Only the Sound Remains* with viola soloist Chris Yates and the BCMG.

After exploring Beethoven and Mendelssohn to great acclaim, the **Sacconi Quartet** have now turned to something completely different: chamber works by Graham Fitkin. For the Signum label, the Quartet have recorded all of the British composer's string quartets, including the work *String*, which was written for them.

#79 ADAGIO

'ADAGIO' IN ITALIAN means 'slow' or 'slowly'. At first, it also seems to have meant a leisurely pace, somewhere between *andante* and *largo* – which is what Girolamo Frescobaldi (1583-1643) meant when he wrote 'adasio' [sic]. In the 18th century, some Baroque composers used it to indicate that ornamentation was needed: in other words, don't hurry the music, but rather fill it out with melodic flourishes, turns and twists.

Ornamentation can be playful arabesque, but it can also be highly expressive, which may well have led to an association between *adagio* and an intense form of emotional outpouring. If so, how fascinating that the association with intensely expressive melodic decoration should persist, not only in the *adagios* of Beethoven's late piano sonatas, but also in the *Adagio* finale of Mahler's Ninth Symphony. Each time the theme returns in the Mahler, it acquires yet more lavish decorative encrustations: in fact, when you look at it in the score you realise how close it all is to standard practice in a Baroque aria.

DISCOVERING MUSIC

Stephen Johnson gets to grips with classical music's technical terms



By Mahler's time, the word 'Adagio' (now often with an initial capital) had come to symbolise something very special, particularly in German-speaking lands. The *Adagio molto e cantabile* third movement of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony was the *locus classicus* here: clearly something sacred was being uttered,

something that needed due weight and plenty of time to say what it had to say. The fact that Beethoven had, somewhat inconveniently, marked this *Adagio molto* at a relatively sprightly 60 beats per minute was increasingly overlooked – an attitude probably justified (if at all) by recourse to the old 'Beethoven's metronome was broken' argument.

Bruckner's *Adagios* and the *Adagio lamentoso* finale of Tchaikovsky's *Pathétique* Symphony all sit solidly in that tradition. So by Mahler's time, 'an Adagio' had come to signify a portentous, emotionally charged slow movement – a very slow movement. When Mahler marks the Ninth's finale *Molto adagio*, then *Molto adagio (but broader than at first)*, then *Adagissimo*, it isn't so much a sequence of carefully terraced tempo changes he's looking for as a progressive intensification of Beethoven's 'sacred adagio' quality.

The terrifyingly cathartic *Adagios* of Berg's *Lulu* and Shostakovich's Eighth Symphony are Mahler's 20th-century heirs. Striving for transcendence has collapsed into violence and desolation. After that – silence?

Lost but not forgotten



How familiar are you with the music of Maddalena Casulana? Or how about Adele aus de Ohe (left)? These are just two of many female composers whose cause BBC Radio 3 is

planning to champion in a new project to research and record their music. Beginning this month, the project, which is being conducted in collaboration with the Arts and Humanities Research Council, aims to bring people's attention to music by women which deserves to be heard but has somehow become forgotten. 'Through researching for *Composer of the Week*, we discovered that there were composers it was not possible to feature because the performances or recordings to play to our listeners just didn't exist,' says Radio 3's Edwina Wolstencroft.

ILLUSTRATION: ADAM HOWLING

APP REVIEW

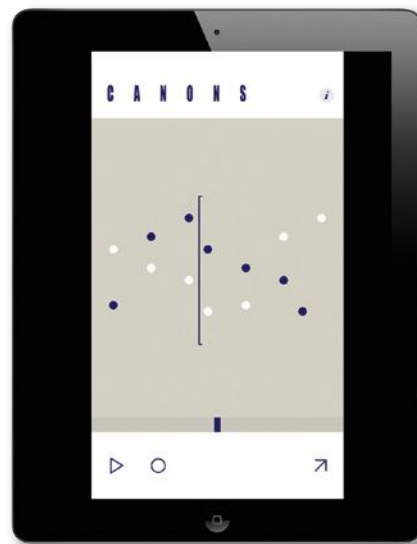
Every issue we explore a recent digital product

Third Coast Percussion: Reich **FREE**

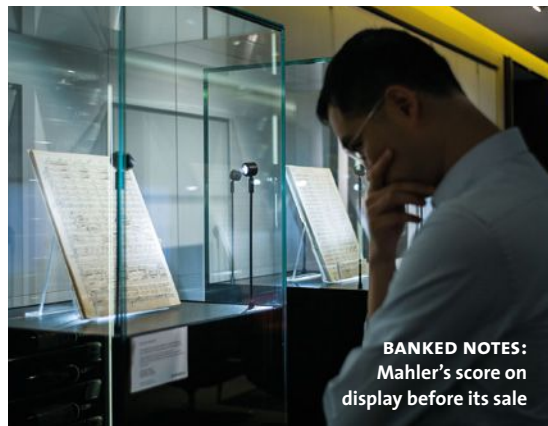
Made by Third Coast Percussion, an ensemble based in Chicago that has recently released a disc of music by Steve Reich, this app is unashamedly a marketing enterprise. It allows users to explore Reich's music, customise it to create their own tracks, then share the result (and the album cover) on Instagram. There are three different sections – 'phasing', 'additive' and 'canons' – each based on a specific Reich work. Users can record their own sounds to overwrite what already exists, or simply play around with the timing of the existing tracks. It's all very stylish but, sadly, also designed in such a way that it isn't always clear how to navigate it, with user guides so tucked away that they're quite ineffectual. You can't undo changes and return to the original tracks once you've recorded your own,

so the opportunity to be really creative is comparatively limited. One for Reich fans and music students only.

Elinor Cooper ★★★



Mahler's maximum score



BANKED NOTES:
Mahler's score on display before its sale

The original handwritten manuscript of Mahler's Second Symphony has broken the record for the most expensive score ever sold at auction. At an eye-watering £4,546,250, the much-coveted lot went for a little more than its estimate at Sotheby's in late November, and the anonymous purchaser will now take possession of a 232-page score that comes just as the composer left it, including his own alterations and annotations. The manuscript was previously owned by US publishing magnate Gilbert Kaplan (1941-2016), who famously devoted the last 30 years of his life to conducting and recording the work.

TWITTER ROOM

Who's saying what on the micro-blogging site



@cargillmezzo *Today I am discovering the heady heights of bathroom showrooms*
Sounds like mezzo Karen Cargill (left) clearly has plans to sing Ravel's *Sink M lodies*

@Richard_Uttley *Birds started (weren't doing it before) twittering at Schumann 'Vogel als Prophet' in Cornwall yesterday. Dread to think what they told us.*

As pianist Richard Uttley plays, the Cornish birds log onto Twitter. Cripes. Clever birds.

@jbartonmezzo *You know what? Hugs... hugs to all of you, for whatever reason you'd like or need. There can always be more hugs.*

We expect Gershwin's 'Embraceable You' to feature in mezzo Jamie Barton's next recital

@hugorifkind *People who go to musicals deserve everything they get.*

The Times columnist Hugo Rifkind is evidently feeling brave...

@RolfHind *Why don't we have a Prime Ministerial theme tune?*

A good point, pianist and composer Rolf Hind (right). So go on. Who's up for writing one?



Notes from the piano stool

David Owen Norris



The sun shone dazzlingly on the ice around the little jetty on the fjord – most unusual for Bergen, but in fact it shone dazzlingly most of the time we were there. We marched up the frosty Valley of the Trolls (marching quite unconsciously, but then we all knew that piece), pausing to pay our respects to the forbiddingly sealed cavern in the cliff above, where Edvard Grieg was laid to rest

in 1907, and wife Nina joined him nearly 30 years later.

Then to the top of the hill – named Trolls' Hill by Nina, when some inventive farmer, keen to sell off a precipitous bit of shoreline with no agricultural value, told her that the valley was called Trolls' Valley. Trolldhaugen, the Griegs' wooden summer residence overlooking the fjord, is beautifully maintained as a museum – though in fact, rather like the Elgar Birthplace, there actually is a purpose-built museum next door, with its own concert hall.

Grieg dominates the nearby city of Bergen to an extent that makes the natives uncomfortable. There's more to Bergen than Grieg, they explain, and during a week of walking round it, we saw their point.

Grieg dominates the nearby city of Bergen to an extent that makes the natives uncomfortable

It's easy to find the Bryggen, the world heritage site of carefully rebuilt early-18th-century warehouses, but on previous visits I'd never had time to climb the precipitous slopes behind, with their higgledy-piggledy jumble of wooden houses each peering over the shoulder of the one in front. Or to visit the ancient Mariakerke – not that we quite managed that this time either, though we stood outside the locked church for a while, listening to some awe-inspiring reed stops on the organ.

We did get into St John's, commandingly placed on one of the other steep fingers of rock that reach into the sea. St John's has a fine example of my *b te noire*, a carillon of enormous bells on which people play harmonised tunes, apparently deaf to the fact that a chord on bells that big has so many overtones that it's not so much a chord as an omelette. (I remember listening to the carillon at 's-Hertogenbosch as it performed Liszt's organ Fantasia on BACH. The pedal solo, four notes a semitone apart relentlessly repeated, was indescribable.)

Along from St John's are the fine neo-classical buildings of the University, which brings us straight back to Grieg. There's the Grieg Academy, where I was working. And next to it is the Grieg Hall, with a life-size statue of the tiny man in front. I jumped up on the plinth to check. Seriously tiny, like the hats in the museum. Schubert was about the same size. Must be something to do with tunes. ■

David Owen Norris is a pianist, composer and Radio 3 presenter

MUSIC TO MY EARS

What the classical world has been listening to this month

LISA OSHIMA *violinist*



I have been enjoying **Schubert's** Fantasia for violin and piano, played by Szymon Goldberg and Radu Lupu. In Goldberg's later life, he lived in Japan with his Japanese wife, with

whom I studied. I often had the chance to hear him in masterclasses and rehearsing with the orchestra, and it was so impressive how he always brought out some hidden message from the music. There is plenty of character in this recording, and Lupu's playing is so beautiful – it's like being in heaven.

■ Recently, I watched **Sviatoslav Richter's** documentary *Enigma*, on which he performs Schubert's Piano Sonata in B flat (D960). He plays especially slow tempos throughout the Sonata, but I never get tired of it. Instead, it takes me to a different world – so deep and one of pure sadness. I love Lupu's recording of the work too, but his is one of beauty while Richter's borders between life and death. I think we should experience both of them.

■ I've never heard a performance of **Paganini's** Violin Concerto to match that by Philip Hirschhorn at the 1967 Queen Elisabeth Competition. He has a perfect, brilliant technique and a great deal of power, but on the other hand his playing on this recording has



ROMANIAN MAGIC: Radu Lupu is spellbinding in Schubert

OUR CHOICES

The BBC Music team's current favourites



Oliver Condy
Editor

A trip to the German capital to hear the

Berlin Philharmonic under Simon Rattle in November opened my ears to the sensuous, intricate beauty of the **Second Viennese School**. Although our musical journey, from Schoenberg's *Five Pieces for Orchestra* to Webern's *Six Pieces* and, finally, Berg's *Three Pieces*, took us gently towards the starkness of pure Serialism, the orchestra never failed to revel in the music's Romantic roots.



Jeremy Pound
Deputy editor

I've long been interested in the life and

work of the ill-fated Spanish poet **Federico Garcia Lorca**, but was previously unaware of his musical talents. A new disc of his arrangements of Spanish folk songs, superbly performed by flamenco singer Estrella Morente and pianist Javier Perianes, is fascinating to listen to. His style is, on the whole, fairly simple, but also utterly charming and absorbing.



Rebecca Franks
Reviews editor

A composer I discovered just last year

is **Florence Price** and, from what I've heard so far, I'm a fan. Her Symphony in E minor made history in 1923 as the first symphony by an African-American to be played by a major American orchestra, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. Her Third Symphony, meanwhile, which I've explored this month, is a glorious fusion of jazz, African-American spirituals and European classical idioms.

great sensitivity and honesty to it too. Hirschhorn was a talented young violinist who actually won that competition, with Gidon Kremer back in third place. Sadly, he died around 20 years ago.

■ The violinist Erich Höbarth was the concertmaster of Nikolaus Harnoncourt's Concentus Musicus Wien ensemble and worked with him a long time. I adore Harnoncourt's interpretations of **Bach**, and Höbarth's



own recordings, with Aapo Häkkinen, of Bach's Sonatas for Violin and Harpsichord have a rare style to them. Listening to them, I feel as if he enjoys playing every note. He also speaks a lot via the music and the playing is so honest.

Lisa Oshima's new disc of Prokofiev violin works (Quartz) will be reviewed next month

DANIEL KIDANE *composer*



I've followed the band **GoGo Penguin** since their inception. I know the pianist, Chris, from college – he actually played one of my first piano trios. I love the band's mash-up of

minimalist piano themes, propulsive bass lines and electronica-inspired drums. Their album *v2.0* is absolutely brilliant – each song bleeds through to the next so it feels like one long set. In their live gigs they often work with visuals and choreographers to add to the act, and there's always an amazing atmosphere.

■ NMC are a label close to my heart as a composer. It recently released a compilation album called *Next Wave*, full of music by up-and-coming composers. On this one album you get a real range of styles to explore by composers you mostly won't have heard



of before. Three really stood out to me: **Michael Cutting**, **Ben Gaunt** and **Ryan Latimer**, whose music is energetic and attention-grabbing.

■ The **London Sinfonietta's** concert series at St John's Smith Square has been brilliant this season. It's

innovative, fresh, and they're playing a lot of music which doesn't usually get programmed. I think the move to St John's Smith Square has been brilliant. It's got a great acoustic and a great atmosphere, and it is a lovely place to be. Last time I went to a concert there they played music by Italian composers,



from Berio through to lots of new pieces by living composers, which were really interesting to hear. ■ I think a lot of composers of my generation have much wider spectrums of listening than used to be the case. For me, everything I listen to influences my music. I'm currently writing some orchestral pieces that are influenced by **Jungle** and **Grime** music. I wanted to write something that was fun, but would also captivate and give the listeners something they can relate to. I'm trying to engage kids who wouldn't ever think of listening to classical music by giving them a hook into the piece – something they recognise from their own experience. *Daniel Kidane is the recipient of a 2016 composer award from the Paul Hamlyn Foundation*

ANDREW SMYTH

The Great British Bake Off finalist



When I was at school, I was a flautist in the City of Belfast Youth Orchestra – this is where my love of orchestral, and then choral, music started. One of the pieces I particularly remember playing, and which I still regularly come back to, is **Mendelssohn's** *Hebrides Overture*. It's so visceral and you can feel the crashing of the waves in the music. ■ At Cambridge University, I joined the chapel choir of Magdalene College as a tenor. One of the pieces I sang towards the end of my four years was **Balfour Gardiner's** *Evening Hymn*, and I still have an emotional attachment to it. It's got that soaring ending and almost gung-ho organ accompaniment, which I really love, even if some might think it's a little cheesy. There's a good recording of it by King's

OUR CHOICES

The BBC Music team's current favourites



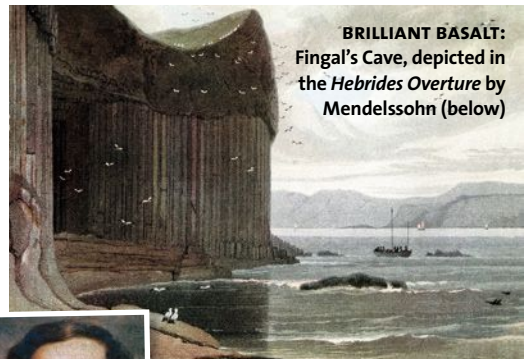
Neil McKim
Production editor

I saw a BBC documentary on London's Roundhouse recently, including its early avant-garde performances. **Ligeti's** *Nouvelles Aventures*, for three singers and seven instruments, was programmed in 1971. Each performer produces startling effects, moments of silence giving way to interjections, from shouts and chattering to ripping paper and blasts of French horn.



Elinor Cooper
Editorial assistant

I was recently lent a copy of the Berlin Philharmonic and Sir Simon Rattle's superb recording of **Musorgsky's** *Pictures at an Exhibition*. In Ravel's extraordinary orchestration, every corner of the ensemble is given a moment of glory, and Rattle makes the most of the expansive, detailed score. Sadly, I've had to return the copy, so will be getting my own as a New Year treat.



BRILLIANT BASALT: Fingal's Cave, depicted in the *Hebrides Overture* by Mendelssohn (below)



College Choir, which also has that Cambridge connection for me.

■ I still have strong memories of John Dilworth, who was one of the organ scholars at Magdalene

and also from Northern Ireland, playing **Schubert's** Impromptu in G flat (D899, No. 3). The way he played it was phenomenal. For me it's the total opposite of the *Hebrides Overture*. While that is emotionally volatile, this, in contrast, is very soothing and beautiful. There's a simplicity to it that I like.

■ I still sing today, and have recently been trying my hand at musicals. One of the musicals that I have come across – and it is one that I would love to get involved in – is *The Last Five Years* by **Jason Robert Brown**. It's about two people, who tell the story of the last five years of their lives in opposite directions – their songs meet and cross in the middle. There's a song from it called 'Moving Too Fast' which is very upbeat, and the sort of thing I jive along to while baking in the kitchen!

AND MUSIC TO YOUR EARS...

You tell us what you've been enjoying on disc and in the concert hall



Michael Thorn Helston
The music of **Steve Reich** (above) becomes alive and accessible when played live, and

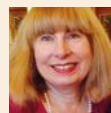
that was my experience at a recent concert by the Britten Sinfonia with Synergy Vocals at Colston Hall, Bristol. Seeing the dynamic complexity



Frank Stack
Southampton
Vivaldi's *Four Seasons* and **Piazzolla's** *Four Seasons of Buenos Aires*

were alternated in an electrifying concert given recently by son, Southampton's new professional orchestra, conducted by Robin Browning. Violinist Daniel Rowland's physical energy and musical risk-taking demanded extreme dynamic

contrasts from the orchestra. Piazzolla's remarkable pieces are responses to Vivaldi's *Seasons*, but in this performance it seemed that it was Vivaldi – strange, nervous and edgy – who was responding to Piazzolla.



Jacky Tarleton
Exeter
I have just enjoyed three music-filled days in Oxford. Welsh National Opera

performed **Verdi's** *Macbeth* and **Cole Porter's** *Kiss me Kate*. Oliver Mears's background as an Oxford English and History scholar was evident in the raw energy of his stark, dramatically powerful production. *Kiss me Kate* was a joy from beginning to end, and 'Brush up your Shakespeare' brought the house down. I also attended a delightful recital given by Aoife Miskelly and Johnny Herford, with William Vann at the piano, as part of the Oxford Lieder Festival. They interspersed songs by Brahms and

the Schumanns with readings from their diaries and letters. The whole, delivered with confidence, charisma and panache, was a joy.



David Smith
Kirkintilloch
Congratulations to the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra and Martyn

Brabbins for programming **Tippett's** First Symphony. I have tried listening to this work on disc many times but have been unable to make sense of it. But in City Halls, Glasgow, I yet again discovered that there is no substitute for live performance. A pre-concert talk put the work in context, and the audience's reaction to the symphony itself showed that many people shared my appreciation of it, and of the chance to discover something beyond the usual Classical and Romantic diet. Tell us what concerts or recordings you've been enjoying by emailing us at musictomyears@classical-music.com

NEWSINBRIEF



WINNER: Hoffmann and the Duke of Kent

FLICK VICTOR

Congratulations to Niklas Benjamin Hoffmann, who has won the 14th Donatella Flick LSO Conducting Competition. In the final at the Barbican, the German, 26, impressed a jury that included maestros Antonio Pappano and Yuri Temirkanov with his mastery of Verdi, Elgar and Rachmaninov. He received a prize of £15,000 for his baton brilliance.

COMPOSER JOY

Talking of winners, Claudia Molitor and Tansy Davies are among those celebrating their first ever British Composer Awards, in the Stage Works and Sonic Arts categories respectively. Others wearing big grins at the event at the British Film Institute included Roderick Williams, who won the Choral category. He adds his trophy to those he has also won as one of the UK's top baritones.

HONOURABLE VAS

Vasily Petrenko has been appointed a Liverpool Citizen of Honour. The Russian, who has proved a huge success since being appointed chief conductor of the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra in 2006, joins a list of just 28 such honorees, who are drawn from all walks of Liverpudlian life.

OPEN TO QUESTIONS

And to round off this column of competitions and awards, how could we forget to mention the Nordoff Robbins classical music industry quiz that was recently held in London, raising thousands of pounds for said music-related charity? Modesty prevents us from revealing which Bristol-based classical music magazine emerged as winners. Ahem.

Sparky idea proves a gas

Switched-on conductor launches Smart Meter Choir



Nothing gives us more pleasure at *BBC Music Magazine* than to be reminded that Britain really is the land of song. So it's with excitement that we learn of

the launch of Energise: The Smart Meter Choir. Trained and conducted by Tim Rhys Evans, of *Only Men Aloud* fame, Energise: The Smart Meter Choir will be comprised of, yes, smart meter installers, the men and women who will be responsible for changing the have-a-rough-guess analogue gas and electricity meters in our homes to precise digital ones. And, we are told, with a new song and recording in the pipeline, things are ticking over nicely for the meter musicians. 'We're thrilled,' says a spokesperson for Smart Energy GB, 'that Tim was so inspired by the army of smart meters and call centre staff who are the backbone of the smart meter rollout, hard at work making sure everyone gets their digital upgrade. I'm sure this song will get the teams whistling while they work.' Or even singing...?

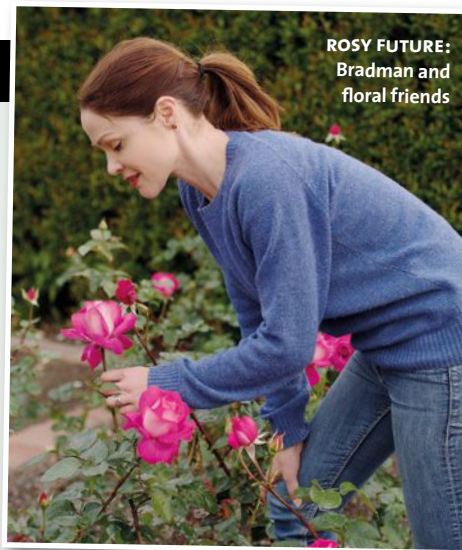
AFTER HOURS

Musicians and their hobbies

GRETA BRADMAN
Soprano

GARDENING

I grew up in the Adelaide Hills in South Australia and spent so much time out in the paddocks and garden. Since I've had my children, my passion for gardening has been reignited. My husband and I live in inner-city Melbourne with a front yard that's tiny really, but there's something lovely about being surrounded by roses and plants. I love things that either have a really beautiful fragrance or are edible, or ideally both. I have a big herb garden, with pots and a wooden crate packed with tomatoes, capsicums and cucumbers, and a salad garden where I harvest lettuces, spring onions and silver beets. I get a ridiculous amount of joy from being able to wander into the garden and grab things to have for dinner. I also have my roses. Mr Lincoln is my very favourite variety, and Double Delight is



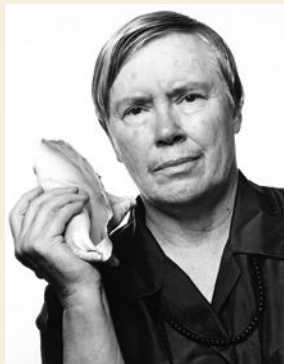
ROSY FUTURE:
Bradman and floral friends

a beautiful tea rose, yellowy coloured with tinges of pink on the outer petals. I love roses because they don't really shrivel up and die in the Australian sun, and underneath my roses I have lavender. I walk in through the front gate, smell the garden and I'm home. It's this bubble of serenity and a sanctuary.

Bradman's album 'My hero' is reviewed on p81



Farewell to...



PAULINE OLIVEROS

Born 1932 Composer and accordionist

Pauline Oliveros's life's work was all about promoting enhanced sensory perception, or 'deep listening', as she termed it. Her album of the same name, recorded in a disused cistern 14 feet underground in 1989, compels the listener to pay attention not just to musical details, but also to extra-musical noises and the

unusual acoustic of the location. In 2005, Oliveros created the Deep Listening Institute, with a mission of encouraging creative innovation across boundaries and abilities. Oliveros began to play her mother's accordion – a popular instrument in the 1940s – when she was nine, and became a renowned improviser on the instrument. She studied music at the University of Houston, and composition at San Francisco State College, where she met composer, collaborator and friend Terry Riley. Oliveros quickly became frustrated by the limitations of notated music, which she believed constrained the sorts of sounds she could communicate. She bought her first tape recording desk when she was 21, and was soon at the vanguard of electronic music.

Also remembered...

The US countertenor **Russell Oberlin** (born 1928) was a leading figure in the early music movement of the 1950s. His voice was celebrated for its individual and robust tone, and he claimed to be 'the only true counter-tenor' of his era, in contrast with falsetto singers. A founding member of New York's Pro Musica Antiqua, Oberlin retired from singing aged just 36.

Hopeful choir takes national prize



Newcastle's Voices of Hope (left) has been named the Choir of the Year 2016. In the competition's grand final, staged at Cardiff's Millennium Centre and broadcast on BBC Four, the adult-voice choir emerged triumphant with a stylish performance that impressed a jury including conductor Harry Christophers and soprano Danielle de Niese. There were five other choirs taking part in the final, in which the winners of each of the four

categories of the competition – Children, Youth, Adult and Open – were joined by two 'wild card' finalists. The competition itself started back in spring 2016, when regional heats saw choirs from right across the UK pit their vocal talents against each other. Founded in 2011, Voices of Hope has quickly become a force to be reckoned with in choral circles, and is an artist in residence at Newcastle University.

GETTY, NICK RUTTER



HAMLET SHAKESPEARE

Royal Shakespeare Company

"This is a landmark production: Paapa Essiedu is the first black actor to play Hamlet for the RSC in its 55-year history. He is charismatic, capricious and compelling: an impulsive, arresting presence at the heart of a production that reframes the dilemmas in the play by setting it in an unnamed African state." (The Financial Times).

DVD | BLU-RAY

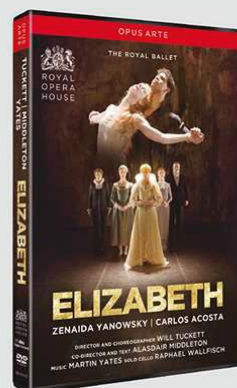


GURRE-LIEDER SCHÖNBERG

Dutch National Opera

This setting of the mediaeval Danish legend of Gurre Castle – a love triangle between King Waldemar, his mistress Tove and a jealous Queen – gains an innovative new dimension in this first-ever staging of the work, directed by Pierre Audi.

DVD | BLU-RAY

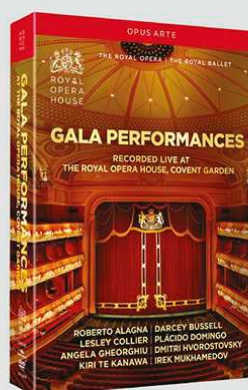


ELIZABETH

Royal Opera House

Choreographer Will Tuckett and playwright and librettist Alasdair Middleton co-direct this special performance, which brings together Royal Ballet Principals Zenaïda Yanowsky and Carlos Acosta with actors Laura Caldow, Sonya Cullingford and Julia Righton in an atmospheric and nuanced tribute to the remarkable life of Queen Elizabeth I.

DVD



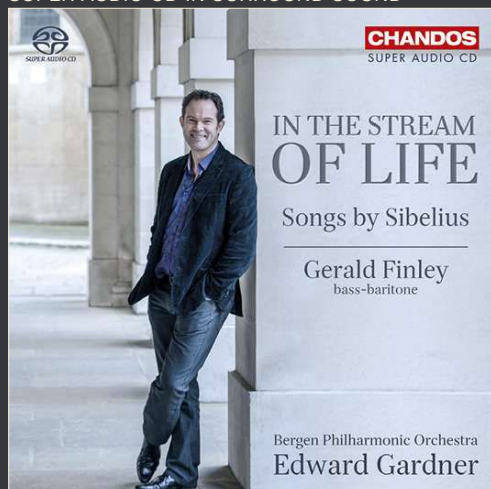
GALA PERFORMANCES

Royal Opera House

Two unforgettable gala concerts from the stage of the Royal Opera House. Includes performances from Plácido Domingo, Kiri Te Kanawa, Darcey Bussell and Irek Mukhamedov, performing highlights from opera and ballet favourites such as *The Queen of Spades* and *Eugene Onegin*, *The Nutcracker* and *The Sleeping Beauty*.

2 DVD SET

SUPER AUDIO CD IN SURROUND SOUND



Disc of the Month

Sibelius: In the Stream of Life

premiere recordings

Gerald Finley | Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra | Edward Gardner

The exceptional collaboration and friendship between the late Einojuhani Rautavaara and the internationally acclaimed bass-baritone Gerald Finley culminates in this unique album of orchestral songs by Sibelius. From orchestrations by Sibelius and others to the premiere recording of *In the Stream of Life*, seven songs orchestrated by Rautavaara for his friend, 'this album became a very personal project when the sessions took place only a few weeks after [Rautavaara's] death, in the same week as his funeral... and I am so thankful that a final addition was made possible when in the last months of his life [Rautavaara] agreed to orchestrate "Hjärtats morgon" and include it in the programme', as Finley reveals in very personal booklet notes.

CHSA 5178

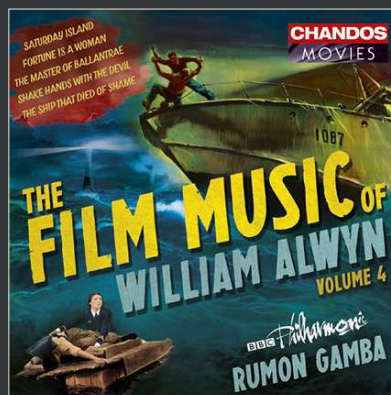


Schubert String Quartets

Doric String Quartet

Explore the fraught world of late Schubert with the Doric's second volume of mature quartets. They will perform the programme alongside quartets by Haydn, subject of another highly praised Chandos series, in international venues, from New York's Carnegie Hall to Berlin's Konzerthaus, Amsterdam's Concertgebouw, and London's Wigmore Hall.

CHAN 10931



The Film Music of William Alwyn, Vol. 4

BBC Philharmonic | Rumon Gamba

The fourth volume is finally out! More than 10 years after the success of vol. 3, Gamba conducts more music which shows to perfection Alwyn's supreme skill in providing music totally attuned to the subject matter, from the dramatic to the exotic, from comedy to the factual. Featuring *The Black Tent*, *On Approval*, *Shake Hands with the Devil*, and many others.

CHAN 10930



Concertos of Josef Guretzky

premiere recordings

The Harmonious Society of
Tickle-Fiddle Gentlemen

The baroque ensemble here commits to record neglected concertos by Guretzky, rich in Italian-influenced virtuosity and dynamism. The album features the premiere recording of four of his nine cello concertos as well as his only surviving Violin Concerto.

CHAN 0816

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MAGAZINE
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The Richard Morrison column

Before we say good riddance to this year, let's ponder what 2017 holds



Looking back, looking forward – that's what columnists do at Christmas. Well, this cut-price Janus has been thinking what he would have written if he'd been hacking out this article exactly a century ago. By December 1916, the news of the shattering death-toll at the Battle of the Somme would have filtered through even the censored British newspapers. So would the growing turmoil in Russia, leading to revolution two months later. Those cataclysmic events affected every family in Europe and cast a shadow over most of the 20th century.

In the great scheme of things, the havoc wreaked on musical life was perhaps less important – but that, too, was changed forever, and hugely diminished in the short term. Imagine the morale of orchestras who had lost half their members in Flanders, or conservatoires with ghosts instead of returning students.

I mention all this partly because First World War commemorations have greatly influenced what orchestras, choirs and soloists performed in 2016, but also to put into perspective the 'upheavals' of the year just gone. To judge from some frenzied social-media comments, particularly from people in the arts, the Brexit vote and the election of Donald Trump rank not far behind the Four Horsemen as portents of global catastrophe. Well, it's possible that either or both will have a traumatic effect on the arts, but in all honesty there are few signs of it yet – apart

from the glorious opportunities for satire offered by the elevation of Mr Trump and the pomposity of his bosom buddy Mr Farage.

Besides which, musical life has not been short of self-generated crises this year. English National Opera, for instance, has had an *annus* that was *horribilis* even by its own traumatic standards. Any chance that the appointments of a sparky artistic director, Daniel Kramer, and a rock-solid music director, Martyn Brabbins, would steady the ship were dashed by

cuts. But it's strange how some orchestras do well regardless, while others flounder. The Scottish Chamber Orchestra appears full of life (and brilliant new recruits) under Robin Ticciati, while the Royal Scottish National Orchestra seems stuck. The Hallé under Sir Mark Elder and the Royal Liverpool Phil under Vasily Petrenko have built support communities of youth orchestras, choirs and outreach projects around them, and the City of Birmingham Symphony

– possibly from one billionaire donor. Meanwhile, the Southbank Centre seems to be offering fewer and fewer classical music concerts. Yes, I know the Queen Elizabeth Hall and Purcell Room are closed for renovation, but in the whole of January there will be just 12 classical concerts in the Royal Festival Hall. Not so many years ago it was nine a week. One wonders how much that huge shift towards non-classical music reflects the tastes of the people currently running the place (which, let's not forget, receives £19m of subsidy a year to offer programming that commercial sponsors couldn't supply). Either way, it's curious that the Southbank Centre has fought so fiercely to stop the new concert hall at the Barbican when it is so tepid about supporting orchestral concerts in its own halls.

Other debates that will rumble on in 2017? Those who treasure the BBC's ensembles may need to help Radio 3's sturdy controller, Alan Davey, to man the barricades in the leaner world that will follow BBC charter renewal. And we all need to keep the pressure on the Government to stop music from being squeezed out of the school curriculum. Thomas Jefferson said that the price of democracy is eternal vigilance. So, too, is the price of maintaining a world-class, inclusive and adventurous music scene in Britain – whether we're part of Europe or not. ■

Richard Morrison is chief music critic and a columnist of The Times

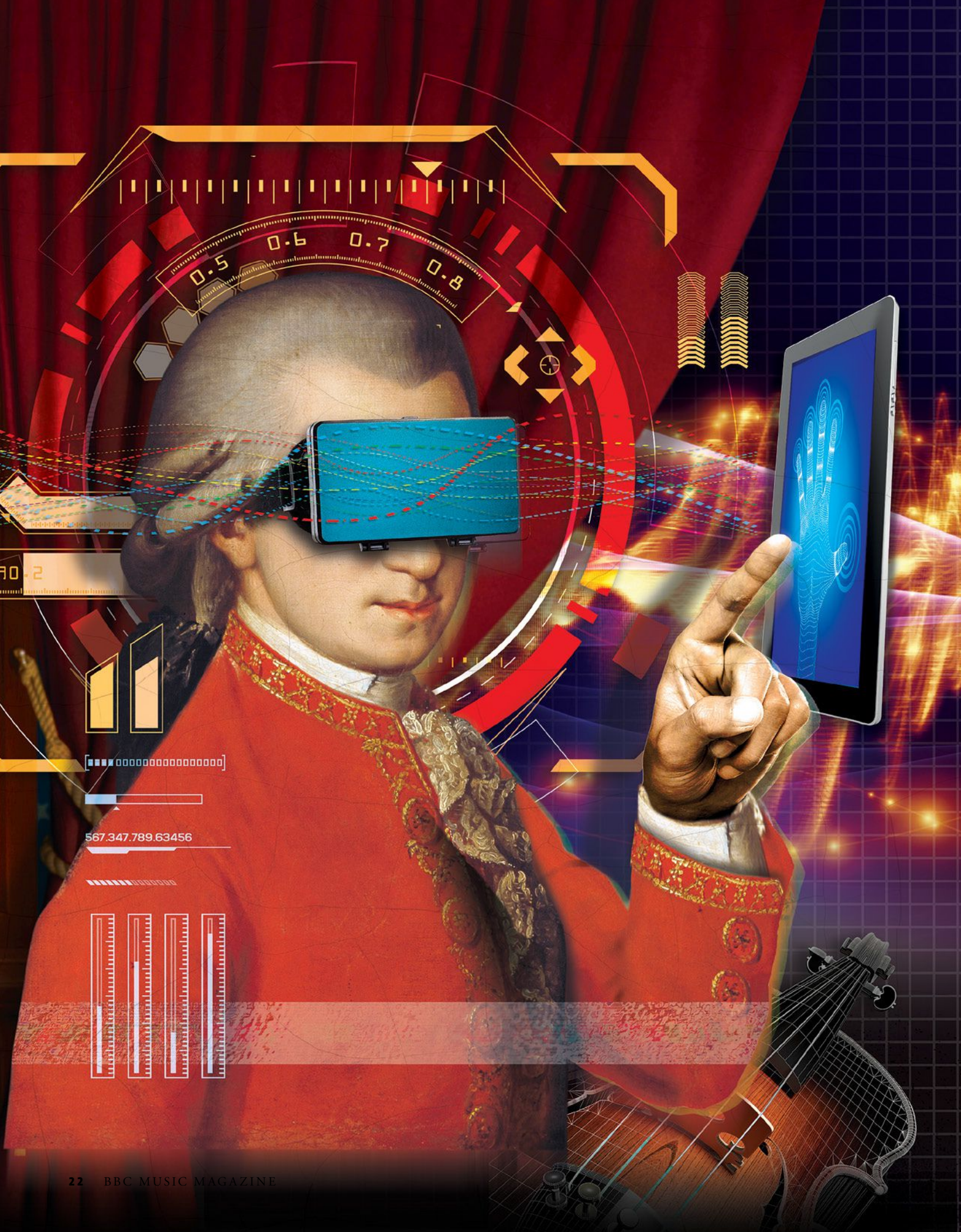
In the whole of January, there will be just 12 classical concerts in the Royal Festival Hall

the revelation that ENO has cut so many shows that it now gets public subsidy of £153,950 per performance – an astonishing figure in these supposedly austere times, especially for a company performing only in London. So far, all the criticism has been heaped on its inexperienced chief executive, Cressida Pollock. But questions will increasingly be asked of Arts Council England, which is supposedly keeping ENO under special scrutiny. Both organisations can expect torrid press coverage in 2017 unless they concoct a financially sustainable, artistically worthwhile long-term vision.

Outside London, the problems in 2016 were chiefly caused by massive local-authority budget

cuts. Orchestra has won global headlines by audaciously appointing the 29-year-old Mirga Gražinytė-Tyla as its music director. On the other hand, the Royal Northern Sinfonia and its bubble-shaped venue, the Sage Gateshead – opened with such optimism only 12 years ago – appear to be stumbling towards crisis, to judge from the miserable attendances at excellent concerts whenever I go there.

In London, too, it's been a mixed year. The plan for a new concert hall was clobbered by the Government's decision to withdraw taxpayers' money from the project, though I understand that the London Symphony Orchestra and Barbican remain confident of finding private money



CLASSICAL MUSIC: THE FUTURE

How will we be performing and listening to classical music in 20 years' time? With the guidance of experts from across the music world, we set the clock forward to 2037 and make a few predictions

ILLUSTRATION MATT HERRING

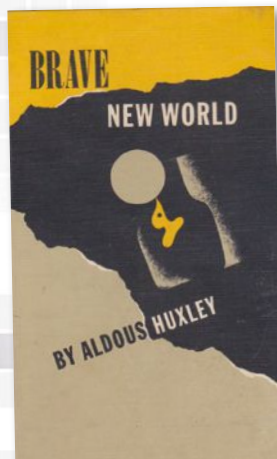
WORDS BY JEREMY POUND, OLIVER CONDY, REBECCA FRANKS, ELINOR COOPER, HELEN WALLACE AND NEIL MCKIM

For Aldous Huxley in *Brave New World*, entertainment of the future was all about a trip to the 'feelies'. Here, movie-goers not only see and hear the action, but feel it in detail too – a love scene on a bearskin rug proves a big talking point. Sounds fun? Now just think what the 'feelies' could do in a classical music context. What would it be like, for instance, to actually feel what a concert pianist's hands feel as they play a Rachmaninov concerto or a Beethoven sonata?

Huxley, writing in 1932 and envisaging a world in 2540, is one of many for whom imagining the future has held a great fascination. Some pitch their imagination centuries ahead, creating weird and wonderful worlds. Others aim their sights closer to the present, and base their predictions on current trends. The latter is what we are about to do as we ask 'What will classical music be like in January 2037?'

That said, in this era of change even 20 years represents quite a leap, as a look back at 1997 shows. Back then, CDs ruled the musical roost – though streaming and download technology was on the radar by then, it was a world away for those of us still accessing the web by plugging our 57K modems into the phonerline. As for recording a performance on one's phone and sticking it on YouTube? Forget it. Mobile phones were used for, well, phoning.

As fashions change and technology moves apace, you can be sure that by 2037 there will be developments that we could not even guess at today – though if there are classical music 'feelies', remember that you read about them here first. But we can have a pretty good stab at predicting what will happen. Over the next six pages we look at how we think things will change in the concert hall and the home, for performers and composers, and in the world of music education too...





TOMORROW'S WORLD:
Lang Lang performs at Paris's
state-of-the-art Philharmonie;
(right) leading acoustician
Larry Kirkegaard

2037 IN THE CONCERT HALL

Of all the ways in which we participate in and enjoy music, the concert hall experience is the one whose future direction is likely to cause the most heated debate. For every person who would like to see concert programming, performers and the buildings they are staged in move with the times, there is another who likes them just as they are – a sanctuary of tradition in an ever-changing world.

The old-style concert – core repertoire, formally presented – will undoubtedly prove durable, and we should be grateful for that. But it is also clear that, for many music lovers, the experience of a night out will be very different in 20 years' time – different in duration, in programming, in venue, in presentational style and in terms of technology. The course of that change, says US pianist Jeremy Denk, is already being charted. 'We're seeing more shorter-length concerts – an hour long, and without intervals,' he explains. 'There's a lot more interest in curating multi-media collaborations. I also think we'll see more of "sex sells" in classical musical!'

Denk himself has won plaudits for taking an imaginative approach to programming – his recent 'Medieval to Modern' concerts, for instance, took listeners from Machaut in the 14th century to Philip Glass in one multi-composer recital. 'For me, the old-fashioned recital, capped off with an encore, is a little bit tired,' he says. 'I prefer a programme to

'Concert halls need to connect music to the big ideas of life'

have more of a story-telling encounter to it and, importantly, I think concert presenters are becoming more interested in that too. Programmes that are outlandish or challenge one's notions of a recital – I get the feeling that there's a passionate audience for certain kinds of concert like this.'

When it comes to innovative programming and accompanying activities, London's

Southbank Centre has also been taking a lead – its 'Virtual Orchestra' project with the Philharmonia orchestra in September, for instance, gave audience members the chance to experience, via virtual reality headsets, what it's like to play Holst's *Planets* in an orchestra before heading into the concert hall to hear the real thing. It's through ideas such as this, believes the centre's director of music Gillian Moore, that new, more diverse audiences will be drawn in: 'The ritual of a concert is great, and there are moments where it is wonderful to have a conductor come on and then simply to hear a Mahler symphony. But that's as long as the venue and orchestra has made all sorts of material available to you beforehand so you can appreciate it, whether that's through an app, great programme notes, talks around it, or projects such as the Virtual Orchestra. What I also think concert halls will need to do more of is connect music to the big ideas of life in general – our The Rest is Noise festival, for instance, told the story of the 20th century through its music.'

What exactly will constitute a 'concert hall' in 20 years time is anyone's guess. Will the



VIRTUAL HOLST:
(this picture and below)
visitors to the Southbank
Centre immerse themselves
in the Philharmonia's
interactive *Planets*



current fad of adding an urban edginess to concerts by staging them in venues such as car parks still hold an appeal? Or will we be increasingly drawn towards night-club style venues, complete with comfy seating and drinks and – dare we say it – discreet talking allowed (see 'Fad Nauseam', p28)?

On the other hand, recent years have seen a crop of stunning new venues that are as technologically advanced as they are meticulously designed – Paris's Philharmonie and Helsinki's Musiikkitalo, to name but two. And as listener expectations are raised to ever higher levels, there is the danger that the less-than-perfect acoustics of many older halls will seem simply unacceptable. But these are also relatively tough economic times and, as London has recently discovered, one can't simply shell out for a new concert hall whenever one feels the need. Perhaps, then, the future will see technology being used to update the acoustic performance of venues we already have, rather than starting from scratch – a sort of 'retro-fitting', if you like.

'It's possible to do that,' leading acoustician Larry Kirkegaard tells us. 'We've worked with a group in The Netherlands on electronic enhancement of sound for spaces that have too little volume to have resonance – we take the sound and process it in a way that plays it back pure but spread over time. It's been very successful.' Or maybe the increase in electronic instruments and amplification will make acoustic design irrelevant anyway? 'I'd like to think that there will always be a place for the purity of natural sound and the artfulness of musicians,' says Kirkegaard.

Enhanced concert-hall technology does, of course, also bring up the thorny issue of personal gadgets in concert halls. London's Cadogan Hall and the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra recently experimented with inviting audience members to bring along their tablets and phones to a concert so that they could follow real-time programme notes on an app. They are not the first, and will be by no means the last. So is this the trend for concerts in the future? Is increased at-seat gadgetry the

way to engage attentions that might otherwise waver? Jeremy Denk is sceptical: 'You can't replace the actual content of the concert...'

And perhaps it's the areas where technology is least perceived that will benefit concert halls of the future. Michael Tilson Thomas, artistic director of Miami's New World Symphony, talks about how all of our senses come to bear on our musical experiences – pioneering experiments with subtly changing lighting, for example, has had surprising effects on unsuspecting audiences. 'A season or so ago, one of our musicians played the Bartók Viola Concerto, and in the last 90 seconds or so of the piece, they gradually intensified and slightly changed the chroma of the light around her to a degree of around five per cent. It was imperceptible as far as she and the audience were concerned. But there was no question that the amount of applause at the end of the work was far greater.'

2037 IN THE HOME

In the past 20 years, our listening habits at home have changed dramatically. We've said goodbye (for the most part) to cassette tapes and to the short-lived MiniDisc (remember it?), and hello to the instant digital download and streaming. CDs are still with us, but sales are on a downward slope, and the download market is already static at best. Is streaming set to become the dominant player? Absolutely, reckons Klaus Heymann, founder the Naxos label, who launched his first streaming service in 1996. 'At that point I didn't think it would take over completely, but I knew it was the future,' he says. 'The problem with streaming until very recently was the cost: to listen to one minute of music on a mobile device cost about \$1.50, which simply wasn't viable.' Since then, mobile data has become so affordable that most of us can listen to music without having to download and store it on our devices via the cloud.

But what about the CD? Will that soon be a thing of the past? 'No,' says Heymann. 'The physical product will be around indefinitely. But even just five years from now, only ten per cent of discs will be pressed in the traditional way. The rest will be digital releases only, with manufacturing on demand.'

This growing technical capability of both mobile devices and data providers has been an unexpected boon for radio – today, nearly 70 per cent of radio listeners tune in via the internet. 'There's so much stuff out there that finding it becomes a tyranny of choice,' says Alan Davey, controller of BBC Radio 3. 'People can feel bewildered about what to listen to next or where to go, and having someone as a trusted guide becomes much

more valuable.' Though the very notion of 'intelligent curation' is the *raison d'être* of radio stations, it has also been taken on by the streaming services, which provide playlists for subscribers curated by authoritative voices: artists, celebrities, magazines and all. Such playlists can be tailored to very specific levels (such as '00s pop hits' or 'Lazy Sunday afternoon') but, believes Davey, they don't yet have what gives radio the edge: 'People are curious; they want information. Just hearing the same thing over and over again doesn't satisfy them. There is an appetite to find out more and move on to something new.'

Radio can't just rest on its laurels, though, and Davey recognises that technological progress will still be vital: 'We must take the opportunity to make sure that we broadcast very high-quality digital. It would be wonderful to give a sense of height, and a sense you're in a real room listening to things, being able to hear the room in which things are being played.' Heymann, however, says there are limits to our demand for aural perfection: 'Frankly, most people can't hear the difference between the sound of a CD and a compressed 320kbps digital file, and they aren't willing to pay to hear the difference.'

Whether or not the market for high-resolution download and streaming does grow exponentially, most agree that there is a need for the consolidation of formats – how many of us really know the difference between our MP3, AAC, FLAC, OGG, WMA and all? 'There's a heck of a lot work to be done,' says

Jonathan Allen, senior recording engineer at Abbey Road Studios. 'The audio world has been so fast and furious in creating competing formats that the next 20 years needs to be spent making things simpler for re-connecting with music-lovers.'

Virtual reality, finally, could become a much bigger player in the classical music experience in the home. Just as the Philharmonia's *The Planets* project (see p24) enabled participants to have the experience of sitting within the orchestra, the BBC has been experimenting with an app that allows you to 'zoom in' to various sections to hear the music from their perspective. Will our home-listening experience be increasingly interactive? 'It could be a multi-sensory experience,' says Davey. 'You might watch a concert on your virtual reality headset, you might have a chip, or it might be projected in the room all around you. Who knows?' Steve Long, director of Signum Records, is not so sure. 'I think virtual reality is going to be huge but not driven by our industry,' he says. 'The educational use is limitless but you wouldn't choose to listen to a Beethoven symphony from the first viola's chair.'

PERFORMERS IN 2037

'Everything that we do, we try to help musicians focus only on their instruments,' says Raphaël Schumann, the CEO of Newzik, the company behind a breakthrough iPad app that enables ensembles and soloists to mark



SCORE DRAW:
Yvan Cassar conducts
Opéra de Rouen using
the Newzik iPad app

up digital scores, share their annotations, 'turn' pages and more. He explains how orchestra librarians today receive boxes and boxes of thousands of pages of scores for each performance. Annotations need to be added to every part, and the music needs to be returned to the publisher afterwards, free of scribbles.

Technology, Schumann says, promises to eliminate all this. 'Twenty years ago, no one would have imagined we'd be reading news on a tablet. People were too attached to paper. Now people are saying the same about scores. Digital promises so much simplicity for the musician.' He foresees that larger, better quality screens with no back-lighting will revolutionise orchestras and that in a couple of decades we'll be able to scroll through pages, not just with a foot pedal as we can today, but simply with the power of thought. 'And imagine a timpanist waiting hundreds of bars to play,' adds Schumann. 'A device will be able to listen to the music and warn him to come in in, say, five bars. It's features like these that will help eradicate all the small problems an orchestra faces today.'

Cellist Matthew Barley, noted for his ingenious use of gadgetry in his concerts, welcomes the benefits that technology can give to performers, but warns of a more pressing problem that will arise in the next decade or so. 'There will be a lot more would-be soloists around,' he says. 'If you look at what's happened in our lifetime – the huge rise of students coming out of colleges worldwide – there is a gigantic rise in the number of would-be professional musicians.'

In the future, imagines Barley, cities will become saturated with world-class talent



FUTURISTIC STRINGS:
this violin was created
on a 3D printer by digital
engineer Brian Chan



with the likely result that artist fees will drop. 'One of the things that will save the classical world will be concerts outside the major cities. Because, in truth, either these people are going to have to give up and not perform at all, or they're going to have to find different places to perform.'

Barley's Around Britten tour in 2013 gave him an insight into the hunger for top-notch music-making: 'I performed to thousands of people outside the big cities that year, from lighthouses on the cliffs of Dover to caves in Derbyshire – people really wanted to hear live music. Today, the big artists never stray out of the cities, but they're eventually going to have to get out into villages and towns.'

If artist fees are set to plummet, might the cost of instruments have to follow suit? Can innovative technology help reduce the often prohibitive prices of violins, clarinets or even harpsichords? Brian Chan, an engineer at Formlabs, a company specialising in 3D printing that has already experimented with printing a violin 'for tens of dollars', believes that the quick, cheap and accurate manufacture of instrument parts is but a generation away. Already, he reveals, printing quality and resolution is at a stage where custom medical parts, including prosthetic limbs, can be produced. But will the resin used for printing ever be able to mimic the complex resonant properties of wood? 'It's one of the great challenges, because wood is basically nature's carbon fibre,' explains Chan. 'I'm certain we'll find stronger, stiffer materials that are closer to wood or carbon fibre – in 20 years, it'll all look very different. We're getting close already.'

IT WAS 20 YEARS AGO TODAY...

What were we reporting in 1997?



BACK IN JANUARY 1997, *BBC Music Magazine* was still very much in its infancy, yet to reach its fifth birthday. Much has changed since then, but three regular features – *Composer of the Month*, *Building a Library* and *Music That Changed Me* – are still going strong in 2017. As, too, is baritone Sir Thomas Allen, who graced our January 1997 cover and, inside, told readers about his love of acting. Particularly intriguing, however, is the 'What's Hot in 1997' feature, within which we tipped musicians including young conductor Daniel Harding, pianist Arcadi Volodos, 19-year-old violinist Leila Josefowicz and Canadian soprano Valdivine Anderson to be the 'Fast movers in the year ahead'. In the news pages, meanwhile, we raised the thorny subject of Cardiff's proposed new opera house, whose progress was stalling amid fears of seeming too elitist – would a more multi-purpose 'Wales Millennium Centre' have a better chance of succeeding?

Two music magazines in publication in January 1997 are, alas, no longer with us: *Classic CD*, which on its cover celebrated the German cabaret singer Ute Lemper; and *Classic FM* magazine, which interviewed soprano Jessye Norman and, to coincide with the release of the Oscar-winning film *Shine*, took a look at the story of maverick pianist David Helfgott. *Gramophone* magazine, a sprightly 73 years old back then, focused on conductor Esa-Pekka Salonen – who, frankly, looked much the same then as he does today.

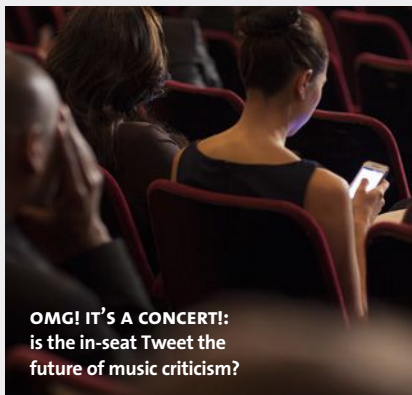
COMPOSERS IN 2037

As ever, one big challenge for composers in the future will be that of competing with their predecessors, whose music has earned the badge of 'greatness'. Living composers need to become an integral part of the concert scene, suggests Colin Matthews, composer and founder of the NMC record label, but adds that 'with a generation of players who don't come with the preconception that they should develop their career largely through the music of the past, that's a genuine possibility.'

It's likely that the interaction between composers and audiences will become more important, with a rise in crowd-funding and composers employed directly by community and amateur music groups. Plus, technology could see us all become composers. 'There are already apps that put together beats and loops, so you can put together music without being able to read it – it's all done with colour,' says composer Cheryl Frances-Hoad. 'In some ways it is wonderful, but in others it is incredibly depressing. I think music will

FAD NAUSEAM

Four short-lived trends



OMG! IT'S A CONCERT!
is the in-seat Tweet the
future of music criticism?

FOR EVERY BRIGHT new idea that sticks around, there are always countless others that are here today, gone tomorrow. Here are four current fads we believe might not last the course of time.

Club-style concerts

You can take informality too far. Yes, we should be encouraging a relaxed atmosphere at concerts, especially if it helps to bring in new audiences. However, once people start to eat, drink and chat away during the music, the performance itself becomes little more than an accompaniment, and the point is lost. The format itself may stick around, but the really top performers will surely avoid it.

Concert Tweeting

The idea behind encouraging audience members to tweet from a concert is a well-intentioned one: spread the word, share the excitement of occasion and so on. However, is it really possible to say anything worth saying in 140 characters? And at what point will there be a general backlash against our mobile phone mania? And let's not even get onto the subject of mid-concert selfies – people's patience is not, after all, infinite...

Vinyl

Strange as it may seem, there has been a significant rise in the sales of turntables in recent years, as thousands of music enthusiasts return to listening on vinyl. But whether that will translate into steady sales of the discs themselves is another matter. Many enthusiasts are simply using new kit to play their old LP collections, and the cost of producing new recordings on vinyl surely makes a continued upsurge unlikely.

Hologram performers

This concept, which is starting to appear with increasing regularity across the globe, involves a pre-recorded hologram of a musician performing 'live' on stage. In some instances, it's a chance to see long-dead performers brought back to life; in others, we enjoy those still with us duetting with their real selves. Fun, but it won't last.

ROBOTIC PERFORMANCE:
researchers at Google are
creating computers that
can compose music; (below)
Cheryl Frances-Hoad



go the way of photography, and possibly we'll feel like professionals do about digital cameras making everyone a photographer.' But she does at least have faith in the resilience of classical music: 'Evidence of our entire existence proves it's not going to vanish. Part of me thinks in 20 years there might be a resurgence in the love of craft of every kind. We'll realise we've bought and downloaded everything we possibly can and that we still need to create things. I've met kids 20 years younger than me who are really passionate about composition.'

Although Frances-Hoad and Matthews both believe it's important to write scores by hand – 'it's a process which brings you much closer to the notes,' says Matthews – technology for composers to publish, record and edit their music is already widely available. And in 20 years? 'By that stage we probably won't need to notate things as we'll have chips in our brains,' speculates Frances-Hoad. 'I saw a documentary about people with disabilities who are able to manipulate mechanical arms with their brain activity. I imagine it will become commonplace.'

Plus, there's a current surge in musicologists working with computers on compositional analysis, and in computer scientists interested

in art. Researchers in the Google Brain team – which is exploring artificial intelligence and deep learning, whereby neural networks can learn without direct human supervision – are looking at whether computers can create 'compelling' art. Challenges include teaching an algorithm to listen, and then to use the

information to create something new. The project is in its infancy, but in summer 2016 Google Brain's Magenta project produced its first 90-second song, and also filled in missing parts from classical pieces, creating music that was 'similar but appreciably different' to the scores the computer was trained on. The aim, though, isn't for computers to replace human composers but to give them new tools. 'Art is about responding to and creating for an audience,' says Magenta research scientist Douglas Eck. 'Unless we consider the weird scenario of computers making music for other computers to appreciate, we will always have the human element in making meaningful art.'

MUSIC EDUCATION IN 2037

Numerous studies have provided evidence for music's social, educational and therapeutic



REACHING OUT:
Julian Lloyd Webber
says that grassroots
teaching must come
from the very top



OLD-STYLE CHARM:
conductor Michael
Tilson Thomas
believes in an
acoustic future

worth. But in an aggressively utilitarian, test-driven educational culture, music will need to argue *fortissimo* if it is to still be on the curriculum in 20 years' time.

'I'm a full-time specialist primary music teacher, but we're an increasingly rare breed,' says Will Green, head of music at Manorfield School in East London. 'Schools are not "tested" on their music provision by Ofsted or SATs, so it inevitably falls down the priority list, unless a headteacher personally champions it.' His vision for the future – that every child would sing for half an hour a day led by a specialist teacher – is easily deliverable: 'That alone would solve the music provision if resources are tight. Just look at the growth in community singing: it's fun, it's free and we build a common song bank that's currently in danger of disappearing.' At the other extreme, cathedral choir schools may have to modernise their structures in order to attract a new generation.

For those with an aptitude, Green predicts instruments will still be learnt through the UK's current system of Music Hubs, provided they continue to be subsidised. And could an Il Sistema model of orchestra-as-social-project, as has famously been used in Venezuela for many years, fill the gap? Green thinks schemes such as In Harmony Lambeth and In Harmony Nucleo North are doing 'really exciting work. But huge resources are

required for intensive instrumental group teaching several times a week.' However, Sistema Scotland is showing how it can work, provided there is a long-term commitment from local councils, government and others.

Across the Atlantic, conductor Michael Tilson Thomas sees a generation of young people growing up without ever having heard an acoustic instrument. 'They are receiving their music at huge levels of amplification,'

'We teach children in townships in Soweto by means of live-streaming'

he says. 'Acoustic instruments may begin to sound foreign to kids but they offer an oasis of intimacy: we have to get them in the same room.' Most agree that, despite instant access to music-making via computers, acoustic instruments will continue to exert a powerful lure – while technology has offered another tool for composers and singer-songwriters, it hasn't replaced acoustic instruments after a century of electronic and digital revolution.

Moving to secondary level in the UK, music is under threat from the EBacc, a collection of 'core' subjects (not including

arts) on which school results are set to be judged. This could lead to fewer music GCSEs and A levels, and fewer students taking 'music' degrees. In 20 years, the subject now known as 'music' seems likely to have changed, with ethnomusicology, music tech and 'creative media' replacing the more traditional analytical, historical and compositional courses.

With an existential crisis looming in music academia, cellist Julian Lloyd Webber, principal of the Birmingham Conservatoire, is clear about the future role of the music colleges. And, he says, it involves using online technology to reach far beyond their four walls: 'We can't afford to sit back and take in the cream of the crop any more; we also need to be driving forward instrumental tuition at the grassroots. You can't bring about diversity in any other way. A good example is ARCO, a project created by Dr Louise Lansdown, our head of strings, whereby our teachers and students teach children in townships in Soweto via skype and live-streaming. The potential here is vast: we could be giving high-quality lessons and practice mentoring to young people all over the world. I also think that young musicians now have access to footage of great performers from the past, and have so much to learn from them.'

Professor Barry Ife, principal of the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, agrees on the need for change: 'Conservatoires will have to adapt to greater financial constraints by being more flexible and outward-facing. Courses will have to become shorter, offer more industry experience and be more open to practitioners in mid-career to refresh and up-skill. There will be more students who want to work across genres and art forms. Institutions will have to get out more, through regional centres and internationally. Over the next 20 years, I would like to see a network of Guildhall centres across the country and working with institutions across the world.' ■
How do you believe classical music will have changed in 20 years' time? Let us know by emailing us at music@classical-music.com

THE JAMES NAUGHTIE INTERVIEW

RICHARD EGARR



He may have been at the forefront of the early music revolution in the 1980s but the harpsichordist and conductor is no purist, insisting that period instruments are simply one part of the Baroque landscape

PHOTOGRAPHY SIMON VAN BOXTEL

Misha the cat paddles across the strings of Richard Egarr's 1804 Broadwood piano, a good excuse to talk about what the instrument is like to play.

We're sitting in a room in Egarr's home in Amsterdam containing another piano (made in 1849 by Pleyel, Chopin's favourite manufacturer) and a harpsichord, the instrument with which Richard has been most associated for nearly 30 years since he sprang to prominence in the early music movement. But it's the Broadwood that seems to interest Misha most.

This was a piano of the kind Beethoven came to love, and which was revolutionary compared with the instruments that Mozart was using 20 or 30 years before. 'The thing to remember about pianos before the 20th century was that they were all very different, each instrument,' says Egarr. 'The point about the English grand piano – like the one Haydn took back from London, when he was teaching Beethoven – is that people were excited by the possibilities of the new dynamic action, which compared to the Viennese piano... well, it was like driving an Aston Martin compared with a DAF or something.'

'The dynamic possibilities and contrasts were just on a different level. When you play late Haydn sonatas or early Beethoven sonatas on a Viennese instrument, they work,

A LIFE IN BRIEF



Early years: Born in 1963, Egarr started his training as a choirboy at York Minster, and Chetham's in Manchester. He was organ scholar at Clare College, Cambridge, before going on to study at London's Guildhall.

Development: Egarr's interest in historical performance was piqued while studying with harpsichordist Gustav Leonhardt in Amsterdam. In 1988 he won the International CPE Bach Fortepiano-Clavichord-Harpsichord Competition, and in 1991 became the harpsichordist of leading early music ensemble London Baroque.

Current: In the 1990s his career as a harpsichordist flourished, but he quickly became known as a conductor. In 2006 he was made music director of the Academy of Ancient Music, a post he still holds today.

of course, but when you play them on these instruments they have such life. The Viennese instruments had a damping mechanism which worked really well in its way – the big bar that sits on the strings – but the English pianos are different. They have tiny little dampers and that changes the sound – there's a wonderful messy resonance around all the time in the English instruments, and that affects your use of pedal and how you think of the music. Playing it gives you such an insight.'

I feel for a few minutes as if I'm having a lesson from Egarr, who became an influential figure in the 1990s and has been directing the Academy of Ancient Music since 2006. He took over the role from the charismatic Christopher Hogwood, founder of the orchestra in 1973, who died two years ago.

Think, Egarr says, about Mozart's A minor Sonata K310. 'It was written in the 1770s. We still have the piano, and it was quite sophisticated for its day and has two levers. One for the treble half of the instrument and one for the bass half. It's either on or it's off. Remember that – the pedal, until the 1780s, was either on or off. It's just something that the modern piano world has not got its head around. You can't do it on modern instruments.'

That's the problem, he says, with thinking about Mozart's piano music as pristine and delicate. 'He had a piano with no damping. ►



Zero. In modern terms, the pedal was either on or off and that was it. The idea of flutter pedalling was unknown – and you had to have one hand free when you wanted to operate the mechanism.’

‘You have to learn from that simple fact. When I teach fortepiano, one of the main things I explain is the pedal and what implications that has for the music, because the idea of keeping a pedal on for a whole movement is so strange. Looking at the A minor Sonata, you ask yourself, where can I put the pedal on? It’s a whole other way of thinking about that kind of instrument.’

Listening to him talking about pianos is the perfect way of understanding Richard Egarr’s journey, because it has been an exploration that has never suggested a ‘right’ answer in performance to him – only one that takes advantage of what we can know about instruments and their possibilities.

He’s never been hung-up on authenticity for its own sake. ‘I use and and store the information I get from the old instruments to inform my performance when I’m playing a Mozart concerto with a modern orchestra and a modern piano. I would never say you can’t play Bach on the piano, because it should be a harpsichord. I’d play Bach on a synthesizer. It’s the same music. If people say, “But isn’t it different music?” – no, it’s only a different way of listening. You’re playing the music on a different machine with different parameters, but the music doesn’t change. I’m just playing it with a different tool.’

The enthusiasm that still drives him, as soloist, teacher and music director of the Academy, was kindled first at Chetham’s School in Manchester and he can pinpoint one of the most important moments in his life when, as a 16 year-old in the late 1970s, he picked up a three-LP set called *Music in the Gothic Era* from a cupboard in the school library, a recording from the blazing spirit of the early music movement, David Munrow. ‘As a chorister, I’d sung Renaissance music, but I had never heard this – Pérotin and so on right through to Dufay and the 15th century. It was unknown to me. That’s when my ears were opened, and I was completely blown away. I couldn’t stop listening to it.’

The consequence was that when he arrived as an organ scholar at Clare College, Cambridge, he was already exploring the early period. When, in an anteroom of the chapel, he found a harpsichord (there had not been one at school that he knew of), he wanted more. Within a couple of years he and a group of friends were starting to make waves.

He’d heard a first-year classics student at his own college playing some Shostakovich at



LIGHT TOUCH:
Egarr with the Academy of
Ancient Music in 2009



‘I’d play Bach on a synthesizer. It’s the same music’

a freshers’ concert, and decided that there was something different about him. That student was Andrew Manze.

Egarr was playing piano trios with other student friends, and eventually he decided that Manze needed to join them. ‘I thought he needed to get on to the Baroque violin, so I put his name on a poster – to play a Brandenburg – and got an instrument from the music faculty. That was it. He never looked back.’

Within a few years they would be touring together – two young stars who had inherited the excitement of the early music revolution and were feeding it into the mainstream so that the chasm that sometimes had seemed to threaten to open up between period-music enthusiasts and modern ensembles began to seem a thing of the past. An old rift healed.

Egarr and his Cambridge friends had started to explore the Italian Baroque, and found a vast repertoire that, even in the 1980s, was surprisingly little known. ‘The exploration of any music on the instruments it was written for is a kind of mind-set – it’s all about wanting to know. What did these instruments do with the music that was written for them?’

In his case, it led to study on the harpsichord, with its formidable challenges. ‘It’s the most unmusical instrument on the planet, full stop. It is the machine that goes ping, in the Monty Python sense.’

Yet he loved it. A year’s study with the famed harpsichordist Gustav Leonhardt – when he came to Amsterdam for the first time in 1987, the city that has now been his home for two decades – was a revelation. ‘What he taught me most, very strongly, was how to listen to listen truly to what the harpsichord does. He would sit in the big room in his house, probably about about 15 metres away from the harpsichord, and he would be able to tell if I was making a dodgy movement, doing something that wasn’t relaxed, and inappropriate. Because a harpsichord is a bit like a computer. You put garbage in and you get garbage out. He really made me focus on what I was doing on the instrument. It is difficult, but of course it has a wonderful repertoire – and it’s a question of persuading it to be musical, because it isn’t.’

As with the Broadwood, we talk about dealing with the keyboard. ‘You have two things – the length of the note and its placing in time – and that’s it. Nothing else. It’s about how long you hold a note and how you place it. If you play one note on any part of the keyboard precisely in time you have one



GRAND O-PUSS:
as Egarr explains keyboard
technique, Misha explores
his 1804 Broadwood

dynamic, so it's all about how you manipulate the sound in time – how much you hold things down. There's a very nasty disease among harpsichord players of playing notes too short, which I don't get at all from my understanding of the instrument.

'It was classed in the 17th century as a resonant instrument – it came from the lute. It was all about creating resonance to make it sing. That's what you have to try to do.'

He gives an example from a masterclass he led in the Far East, listening to a pianist playing the B minor fugue from the first book of Bach's '48'. 'On the harpsichord it's very quiet, because the top end of the harpsichord is a gentle area, and this guy was playing the whole sequence incredibly loudly at the top of the piano – and very well – just because he could. I said to him that he couldn't do that on the harpsichord – you just couldn't. I'm not saying you shouldn't, but knowing how the harpsichord operates informs your decision about how you'd play it on a piano. Don't play it one way just because the piano can.'

But it would be ridiculous to portray Egarr, just because of his expertise on early instruments, as a musician caught in the time-span of his greatest enthusiasm. Emphatically, he is not. The evidence is all around in his house. Shelves of vinyl, for example. And 78 shellac recordings, which he plays on a lovely wooden box surmounted by the model of a dog which we all know as His Master's Voice.

'Vinyl is a bit like listening to early music on original instruments. I listened to *Sgt. Pepper* the other day on an original mono pressing from 1967 on a good hi-fi and it's not the same as a re-mastered version. With all its supposed defects – it just sounds better. And listening to Caruso or Gigli on 78s through that machine over there? There's no comparison between that and a CD transfer. None. It's live, and they're in the room with you. Listening to old

'Vinyl is like listening to early music on original instruments'

shellac on an machine like this with its crackle and pops is a different experience.'

We talk about his heroes in performance – Bernstein, Munrow from his youth, Reinhard Goebel in early music, jazz pianists like Oscar Peterson and Art Tatum – 'listen and you'll hear why Rachmaninov called him a genius' – all of them communicators who were able to pass on a feeling of their own passion. He remembers hearing one of Bernstein's last Mahler performances – the First Symphony – in a cycle at the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, which he counts as one of the best concerts he's ever heard. 'I'll never forget the

feeling about the first movement. He drew it out so beautifully, then let it go. That ability to create those kinds of feelings in an audience with the orchestra – unforgettable.'

And as he speaks, looking down from the wall is the portrait of another hero, Leopold Stokowski. 'He was an incomparable communicator and investigator, forever renewing his ideas about everything. He gave more than 2,000 premieres. Ground-breaking performances – Schoenberg, the first Mahler 8 in America – and he never stopped looking for the new and the exciting in music.'

'We know him as the great orchestrator of Bach from the 1930s when he was bringing that music to people who hadn't heard it, with the Philadelphia Orchestra and the sound he created. It wasn't only Bach, but Lully and Palestrina arrangements too. He was exploring all sorts of different music on his own instrument at that time: the modern orchestra.' It's an instrument he respects as much as his harpsichord, or that 1804 Broadwood. Richard Egarr is the most rounded of musicians. As if to prove it, I find a collection on his shelves that seems surprising: LPs of Cliff Richard and the Shadows, from 50 years ago.

'Why not? I love rock 'n' roll, so I've always been a Cliff fan. What's surprising about that?'

On second thoughts, nothing at all. ■

In the 2016-17 season Richard Egarr celebrates 10 years as music director of the Academy of Ancient Music. Visit www.aam.co.uk for details



STEREO STARS:
recording engineers Robert
Gooch (left) and Christopher
Parker return to Abbey Road

TWIN PEAKS

Stereo sound was discovered in the 1930s and to this day is still the recording industry standard. *Simon Heighes* meets two of its most important pioneers

Today, stereo comes at us from all directions: TV, car radio, the CD player, as well as our own personal 'stereos'. We take it for granted, just as we do colour film and wide-screen cinema – technology which has brought us ever-higher definition and realism. Back in the 1930s it was the search for a more realistic cinematic experience which got the British scientist Alan Blumlein thinking. His son Simon recalls that 'my father was at a film with my mother and asked her to imagine that if a blind man was sitting next to her, he'd have no idea where the characters were on the screen because all the sound was coming from one direction – a single, mono loudspeaker. But my father reckoned he could develop a system which would make the sound more naturalistic, following the movement of the actors across the screen. He called it "binaural" (two-eared) sound – which we now know as stereo'.

Alan Blumlein did his research at EMI's Central Research Laboratory at Hayes in Middlesex, discovering how to capture two separate sound channels from one sound source (just as our ears hear) to create a greater sense of spatial realism in a recording. Beginning in 1931, his 70-or-so patents covered microphones, sound recording and processing, and playback – all in 'binaural' (stereophonic) sound. In March 1934 he visited EMI's newly-opened Abbey Road Studios to experiment with a full orchestra, recording stereo snippets of Mozart's *Jupiter* Symphony with the London Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Thomas Beecham (the test recordings still survive).

Just as he promised his wife, Blumlein also produced the world's first stereophonic films, with characters walking and talking, and trains



TWICE AS GOOD: Alan Blumlein, the man who invented stereo, and (right) his innovative microphone

chuffing realistically across the screen. But before he could develop any of these ideas further, his research was shelved, partly because EMI saw no immediate commercial opportunity for stereo, and partly to allow Blumlein time to develop fledgling television and airborne radar – and it was while testing the latter in 1942 that he was killed in a plane crash.

It wasn't until the early 1950s that EMI turned its attention once again to stereophonic sound. A pair of young recording engineers – Christopher Parker and Robert Gooch – were recruited to the team at Abbey Road, and were let loose to experiment. They still remember

these days vividly, and in September 2016 they returned to the new high-tech Abbey Road Studios to tell me about their pioneering work.

'The first we knew of stereo was when the technicians came over from the Research Lab at Hayes and tried to teach us about it, introducing us to the theory and the equipment,' says Parker. 'The first actual thing we had in our hands in 1954 was a pair of domestic ribbon microphones mounted on springs in a steel frame (to isolate them from floor vibrations). We tested them on extracts from Mozart's *Figaro* with two pianos and singers from Glyndebourne who we lined up and got to move about so that we could see the effect of movement on a stereo stage.'

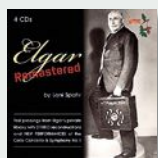
Test recordings continued the following year, and Chris Parker kept a careful note of their progress in his logbook for 1955 and early '56, complete with diagrams showing the experimental layouts of performers and microphones. In March 1955 Sadler's Wells Opera lent a hand, once again running through parts of *Figaro* to test new studio and microphone arrangements. According to Parker's session log, the results were mixed

– 'the singers' sibilants gave rise to strong studio reflections, resulting in an unpleasant twitter' – but the special-effects tests were more successful, ensuring that Cherubino would be able to make a realistic-sounding jump from his window in Act II. These careful preparations paid off handsomely when the Glyndebourne Festival cast, directed by Vittorio Gui, finally arrived at Abbey Road's large Studio No. 1 in July 1955. All went well and the first stereo recording of *Figaro* was



BOTH SIDES NOW

The best early stereo recordings



Elgar Cello Concerto
Beatrice Harrison (cello);
New Symphony Orchestra;
LSO/Elgar
Somm SOMMCD261-4
'Accidental' stereo
recordings made in 1928.
'The sense of being present
is breathtaking' (Stephen
Johnson review, Dec, p78).



**Mozart Symphony
No. 41 'Jupiter'**
LPO/Beecham LPO-0040
Alan Blumlein's pioneering
stereo tests at Abbey
Road in 1934, plus his
experimental 'walking,
talking' recording of 1934.



**Mozart Symphony
No. 36 'Linz'** London
Mozart Players/Blech
First Hand Records FHR15
The earliest surviving
EMI stereo recording of
a complete work, made
by Christopher Parker
in December 1954 at
Abbey Road.



**Beethoven
Symphony No. 7**
Philharmonia/Klemperer
Warner Classics 567 8512
(download)
One of the earliest stereo
recordings issued by EMI
– on 'stereosonic' tape –
offering a slightly different
set of takes from the
mono version on LP.
Recorded in Oct and Dec
1955 at Kingsway Hall.



Verdi Falstaff
Philharmonia/Karajan
Warner Classics 9029593509
Tito Gobbi as the roguish
Falstaff and Elisabeth
Schwarzkopf leading the
Merry Wives of Windsor.
The 1956 stereo captures
all the wit and warmth.



**Richard Strauss
Der Rosenkavalier**
Philharmonia/Karajan
EMI 9668242 or
Brilliant Classics 9085
Recorded by Christopher
Parker at Abbey Road
in Dec 1956. A ravishing
performance, with
Schwarzkopf as the
Marschallin, and sparkling
sound which showed that
stereo was here to stay.

released the following year (in both mono and stereo) in honour of Mozart's bicentenary.

Although many EMI recordings made between 1955 and 1957 were taped in both mono and stereo, mono remained the primary commercial product and the studio layout was dictated by the mono producer and engineers – often proving incompatible with good stereo. During a recording of Tchaikovsky's Sixth Symphony in May 1955 at Kingsway Hall in London with Herbert von Karajan and the Philharmonia Orchestra, Parker noted in his logbook that he had to contend with '13 reels of quilting hung from the balcony and a large sheet of sail cloth hung alongside the first violins to suit the mono balance'.

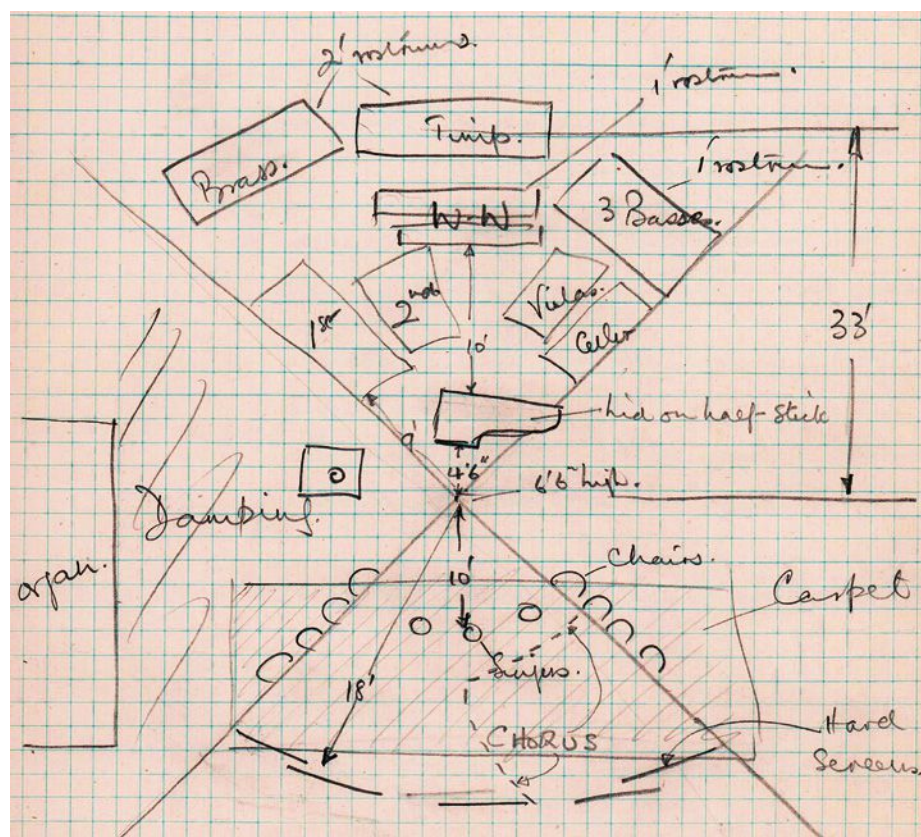
But the two young stereo engineers enjoyed their freedom to try out new ideas, sometimes able to secure sufficient material for a full stereo recording, sometimes not. Capturing the complex harmonics of pianos and balancing them with other performers often proved tricky in those days, but with larger forces Parker and Gooch enjoyed repeated success with Alan Blumlein's technique of using two mics crossed at 90 degrees. With their favourite Neumann M49s (in bi-directional

mode), it was an arrangement which produced exceptionally realistic results – it's still used today and known as a 'Blumlein Pair'.

Despite the many stereo recordings being made by EMI during the mid-1950s, conductors and performers remained largely oblivious to Parker and Gooch's pioneering work because, after setting up their microphones, they were then kept well out of the way. 'Karajan wasn't at all interested in the stereo sound, because no one in the studio heard a note of it,' Parker recalls. 'I was working on my own in a separate room from the producer and engineers who were recording in mono, and there was no way for me to play any of the takes back to the conductor or performers in the studio.' His logbook records his frustration when, in March 1955, Italian tenor Beniamino Gigli and the London Symphony Orchestra weren't quite in sync but he had 'no playback to the artists to correct this' and had difficulty monitoring the recording himself because the listening room was 'too small and reverberant'.

Even by the late 1950s, when stereo had become a commercial reality, many musicians were still wary – not least EMI's senior classical producer, the distinguished Walter Legge. 'He never understood stereo,' says Gooch, 'and when it became the first choice for new recordings, Legge would only work with Douglas Larter, who was one of the old

SOUND SURROUND: studio engineer Christopher Parker's Abbey Road layout for recording Glyndebourne's *Figaro* in July 1955. A pair of microphones were placed at the centre of the cross





MAKING TRACKS:
Walter Legge (left) and
Herbert von Karajan were
sceptical about stereo;
(right) Otto Klemperer's LP
of Beethoven's Seventh

mono engineers. And for the first recording he did – Bach's *St Matthew Passion* with Otto Klemperer – he had the stereo microphones round the wrong way, and Chris [Parker] had to go and sort him out.' Sir Thomas Beecham never took stereo seriously either – for years he delighted in the dismissive mispronunciation of stereophonic as 'stereocomic' or, more dangerously, 'streptocopic'.

But for EMI, the commercial future of stereo looked promising. Keen to capitalise on their technological lead, they began issuing their first stereo recordings in 1955 on a limited series of rather cumbersome 'stereosonic' open-reel tapes. This is how Klemperer's impressive new account of Beethoven Symphony No. 7 was released in 1956, in tandem with the mono version on vinyl LP. It wasn't until the end of 1958, when the technology for cutting stereo LPs had been perfected, that EMI could consider catering for a mass market, and it was a market they worked hard to cultivate.

'It was all a bit gimmicky to begin with. LP demonstration discs were issued to showcase the novelty of the stereo separation. So you could hear a ping-pong match with the ball bouncing on the table from left to right and back again'. For Gooch, the most important demonstration of stereo's potential was to show how it could make complex sounds

more comprehensible. 'There were advertising films in the cinema with three pairs of people: left, right and centre – in mono their three conversations were a jumble, but in stereo they were completely intelligible'.



Mono and stereo happily co-existed for a decade

In the home, these stereo demonstration discs helped people find the right spot for the two 'loud-speaking' guests now invading their living rooms. But the majority of music-lovers opted instead for the simpler 'radiogram' – an all-in-one cabinet incorporating two speakers on either side. For Gooch, this was all a bit disappointing. 'When stereo first came out, the equipment available to the general public was pretty poor and just didn't do justice to our sort of recordings.' Decca briefly offered 'Phase 4 Stereo' which artificially boosted

the stereo balance to make it more impressive on basic machines, but it wasn't long before the demand for more sophisticated playback equipment grew and modern 'hi-fi' was born.

So what impact did stereo have on the recording industry? 'Ultimately, it meant re-recording the whole catalogue,' Parker and Gooch agree. But there was no rush, mono and stereo happily co-existing for a decade, with mono still the standard for much pop music until the late 1960s. At Abbey Road, most of The Beatles' songs were originally mixed and released in mono – and they preferred it. Writing in 1995 George Harrison remembered that in the recording control room 'there was one speaker right in the middle, and that was it. When they invented stereo, I remember thinking 'Why? What do you want *two* speakers for?', because it ruined the sound from our point of view. You know, we had everything coming out of one speaker; now it had to come out of two speakers. It sounded very naked.'

But gradually during the '60s, the words 'stereophonic sound' on a record cover became a benchmark of quality, so much so that many companies tried to extend the life of their mono recordings by reissuing them in 'electronically enhanced' form, artificially

dividing the mono signal into two channels and recalibrating them to give the vague suggestion of stereo. A few years later in the early 1970s it looked as if stereo too would be superseded, as developers at EMI's research lab came up with even more ambitious plans to offer listeners the experience of music from all four corners of their living

rooms. Parker and Gooch were not impressed with these 'quadrophonic' experiments – 'the results were horrible; it didn't work. For the few people who had the systems to play these quadrophonic records on it was a selfish pleasure. There was really only one "sweet spot" to listen from, and for that you sacrificed the simple spatial elegance of pure stereo.'

It's 60 years now since stereo recordings began to trickle onto the market. What do Parker and Gooch think the future holds? 'I don't think adding more channels to the classic stereo sound will increase the realism,' says Parker. 'What we wanted originally was realism – we wanted our recordings to sound as close as possible to the real thing. It's up to the musicians to produce a beautiful sound. It's up to us, the sound engineers, to reproduce this as accurately as we can. After all, the most important thing is the music, isn't it?' ■



LADS ON TOUR

In the early 19th century, a plucky bunch of British men conquered the world's opera stages, adventuring, partying and womanising as they went, says *Anna Maria Barry*

Male opera singers at the start of the Victorian era were a wild lot – rock stars, in effect, who attracted devoted female fans and shocked audiences with their wayward backstage antics. On stage, however, they were just as engaging. With their big voices and even bigger personalities, they travelled to the farthest corners of the world, thrilling audiences with their extraordinary vocal powers. At that time, the majority of singers on the operatic stage were Italian. Which was not surprising: Italy was opera's native land, and Italian singers benefited from ample opportunities for training and patronage. But Britain and Ireland also yielded their own crop of talented male stars, despite the stigma attached to opera singing as a feminine and suspiciously foreign profession.



Home-grown heroes such as Charles Santley, Henry Phillips and Sims Reeves were among those who bucked the trend to become international superstars, often appearing on the front pages of broadsheet newspapers from New York to Sydney. Gossip columns pored over their public performances and private lives, they wrote bestselling autobiographies and specialist shops sold their photographs. Journalists hounded them, fans stopped them in the street. They were even paid to endorse products from cigarettes to alcohol. But despite their fame, most of them today are entirely forgotten, their voices lost in time. And although the great prima donnas such as Jenny Lind and Nancy Storace are still celebrated, the likes of John Braham and Michael Kelly, their huge contribution to British musical history – and their roguishness – have been rather overlooked. Until now, that is...



Michael Kelly (1762-1826)

The first great singer to hail from the British Isles was Michael Kelly. A native of Dublin, the young tenor studied in Italy on the advice of his musical father. The teenage Kelly arrived in Naples in 1779, and spent four years training with Italian masters and performing across the country. Kelly later recounted this period of his life in some remarkable memoirs, recalling his enthusiasms for Italian women and ice cream and describing the various scrapes in which he found himself. In Sicily he was thrown in the clink overnight for fighting over a woman – he spent his incarceration drinking with notorious criminals, and claimed it was one of the most enjoyable nights of his life. Kelly also recounted his dramatic flight from Brescia in the middle of a performance. The theatre's manager had become jealous of Kelly's relationship with the female star, and hired assassins to kill him – unsuccessfully.

In 1783 Kelly accepted a permanent role at the court of Emperor Joseph II in Vienna, where he stayed for four years. He became good friends with Mozart, and appeared as

both Don Curzio and Don Basilio in the premiere of the composer's *Le nozze di Figaro* in 1786. Kelly eventually returned to Britain and established himself as the leading singer at Drury Lane, later becoming manager of the King's Theatre. In London he gained notoriety for his relationship with the married actress Anna Maria Crouch, who also happened to be the Prince of Wales's mistress.

John Braham (1777-1856)

John Braham (pictured opposite) was perhaps the most famous British opera singer of the 19th century, and enjoyed a career spanning a remarkable 65 years. He performed for royalty, collaborated with Lord Byron and Charles Dickens, and worked his way into the upper echelons of society.

These achievements were all the more remarkable given Braham's early life as a Jewish orphan on the streets of London's east end. A cantor at London's Great Synagogue took the young orphan under his wing, training him up as a choirboy. With the support of wealthy Jewish patrons the young Braham eventually launched his career.

In 1797 he embarked on a successful European tour with the British soprano Nancy Storace, who later became his common-law wife. Braham and Storace toured extensively across France and Italy, performing for Napoleon's circle in Paris and also (paradoxically) singing for Lord Nelson who was stationed in Leghorn, Tuscany. It was so unusual for British opera singers to create a sensation in Italy that Braham returned to London a hero. The tenor was especially popular during the Napoleonic Wars, composing a number of patriotic anthems which captured the nationalistic fervour of the period. Most famous was 'The Death of Nelson', a moving tribute to the fallen Admiral. Nelson's mistress Emma Hamilton collapsed with grief after seeing Braham perform it.

In 1816, however, Braham found himself at the centre of a high-profile scandal. He abandoned Storace and their illegitimate child, following a liaison with a married woman called Mrs Wright. Her cuckolded husband discovered the affair and took

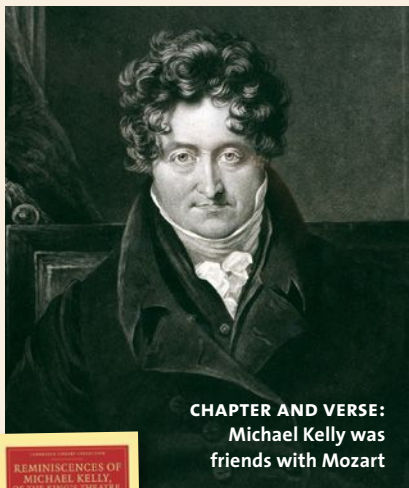
John Braham found time to go crocodile shooting in Charleston

Braham to court for damages. The trial was widely reported in newspapers, and cheaply available pamphlets were sold recounting the sordid details that had come to light in court. One such publication condemned Braham, arguing that his behaviour was typical of disreputable stage folk: 'Few and evil are the days of most Theatrical Celebrities', it dramatically declared, demonstrating the low esteem in which singers were held in Georgian England. Remarkably, the wily Braham worked it all to his advantage. He argued that Mr Wright bore responsibility for his wife's infidelities, as he had failed to prevent her from associating with a dissolute singer. It seemed to work – Braham got away with a paltry fine.

Later in his life, Braham found himself on his uppers after a disastrous foray into theatrical management. The threat of bankruptcy meant that he was forced to tour America despite his advanced age, enduring long and uncomfortable journeys to remote towns for meagre fees. Unfortunately, he left no account of his travels, but his diaries reveal that he found time to visit the Niagara Falls and go crocodile shooting in Charleston.

VOCAL OPINIONS

Opera singers in their own words



CHAPTER AND VERSE:
Michael Kelly was
friends with Mozart



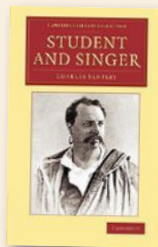
MANY OF THESE SINGERS wrote autobiographies, containing tantalising tales of adventure and valuable insight into 19th-century musical life. Here are three excerpts...

Michael Kelly *Reminiscences of Michael Kelly* (1825)

Kelly on his friend Mozart: 'He was a remarkably small man, very thin and pale, with a profusion of fine fair hair, of which he was rather vain. [...] He always received me with kindness and hospitality. He was remarkably fond of punch, of which beverage I have seen him take copious drafts. He was also fond of billiards, and had an excellent billiard table in his house.'

Henry Phillips *Musical and Personal Recollections During Half a Century* (1864)

Phillips describes the infamous Niccolò Paganini: '[He was a] ghostly figure, thin, rather tall, pale as death, with black glossy hair flowing over his shoulders, long arms, and bony fingers. He seemed like something unearthly gliding almost to the middle of the stage. Altogether, the effect was so strange, so unreal, that a shudder positively ran through the audience.'



Charles Santley *Student and Singer: the Reminiscences of Charles Santley* (1892)
Santley recounts a visit to Rossini's Parisian home in 1862: 'I called on Rossini [...] and was shown into a small room where [he] was seated, with his face lathered, a towel round his neck, waiting for a barber to apply his razor. Of course I called to mind the scene in the "Barbiere" on the spot.'

Henry Phillips (1801-76)

British baritone Henry Phillips, a contemporary of Braham, left a detailed account of his American tour in the 1840s, chronicling his adventures in a fascinating autobiography. He describes sailing on steamers, witnessing the horrors of slavery and narrowly escaping a bear attack. Most interesting, however, is his account of his time with a Native American tribe, the culmination of his long fascination with traditional culture. Some decades earlier Phillips had seen a war dance performed by Native Americans in London and was inspired to work his own version of it into his 1824 performance as Caspar in Weber's *Der Freischütz*. The theatre manager was furious that the young singer had dared to stage such a bizarre stunt, but it was enthusiastically received by the audience, and the dance proved to be one of the great sensations of Phillips's career.

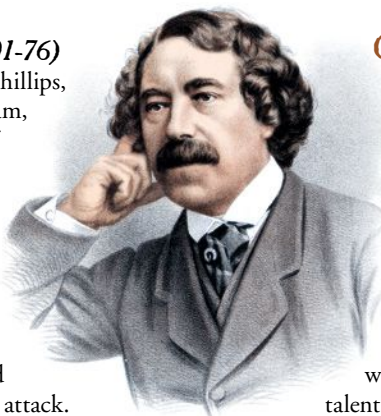
Sims Reeves (1818-1900)

When John Braham died in 1856, the tenor Sims Reeves was widely regarded as his successor. Born in Kent, Reeves was drilled in music by his father, a former bandsman with the Royal Artillery. After studying in Milan, Reeves achieved the near impossible, with an engagement to sing in Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor* at La Scala. For a British singer to appear at such a prestigious Italian venue was quite an achievement, and he returned to Britain a star. His career in opera and oratorio lasted well over 50 years.

But it wasn't all plain sailing – Reeves often found himself mired in controversy. He frequently failed to turn up for performances, citing ill health, although the press often blamed his alcoholism. He was also criticised for the sky-high fees he demanded, and was frequently caricatured in newspapers as greedy and arrogant. In a futile attempt to set the record straight, Reeves published a couple of curious autobiographies, including one that incorporates a selection of short stories of supernatural hauntings and gruesome murders. Unsurprisingly, it did little to restore his public image.

ITALIAN LESSONS:

Sims Reeves (top) and (right) Charles Santley, who both studied in Milan



Charles Santley (1834-1922)

Reeves was great friends with another star of the Victorian operatic stage. Baritone Charles Santley was younger than Reeves, but the two performed together on several occasions. Santley was born in Liverpool to a family of amateur musicians who supported his musical

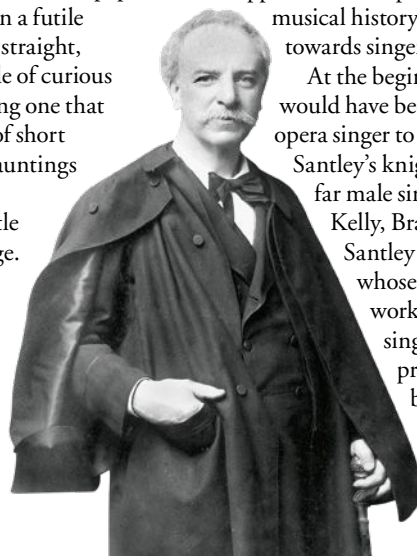
talent. After a stint with the Liverpool Philharmonic Society, the teenage Santley headed to Milan to train as an opera singer. In his memoirs, Santley recalls his time as a student in Italy, describing a lifestyle reminiscent of Puccini's *La bohème*: freezing garrets, bustling cafés and general poverty. But it can't have done him much harm – his time in Milan prepared him well for a 50-year-long operatic career back in London, a highlight of which would come in 1870, when Santley starred in the first production of a Wagner opera in Britain: *Der fliegende Holländer*, performed on this occasion in Italian. Late in his career, Santley committed his voice to record. Although his voice was well past its prime, the recordings (widely available online) give a good indication of his great vocal skill.

Santley was also a celebrated adventurer. His two autobiographies detail his travels around the world, performing extensively across Europe and America as well as Australia, New Zealand and South Africa. Santley recounts his travels with acerbic wit and describes sailing around the Cape of Good Hope, trekking across the desert on a camel and making perilous trips across the snowy Alps. The books were bestsellers, and Santley was admired as a raconteur and man of the world.

In 1907 Santley became the first ever singer to be knighted in Britain, an honour bestowed upon him by King Edward VII to mark the 50th anniversary of his first public appearance. It represented a landmark in musical history, showing how far attitudes towards singers had shifted in Britain.

At the beginning of the century it would have been unthinkable for an opera singer to be honoured like that.

Santley's knighthood indicates how far male singers had come. Men like Kelly, Braham, Phillips, Reeves and Santley were genuine pioneers whose talent, wit and hard work helped at last to establish singing as a respectable profession. They deserve to be remembered. ■



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THE SPIRIT OF BACH

89-year-old Czech harpsichordist Zuzana Růžicková survived the horrors of three Nazi concentration camps and emerged to make a series of major Bach recordings. *Jessica Duchén* meets her

Sunlight streams into the top floor flat in Prague where Zuzana Růžicková has lived for half a century. The Czech harpsichordist, who turns 90 on 14 January, is more than a mere living legend. She was the first person to record the complete keyboard works of JS Bach, in the 1960s-'70s; Warner Classics has just re-released the results, on CD for the first time. They are a revelation, overflowing with colour, brilliance and *joie de vivre*.

Růžicková no longer plays, devoting herself now to revitalising interest in the music of her late husband, the composer Viktor Kalabis (1923-2006). But she happily talks all afternoon, her disciple Mahan Esfahani at her side, tobacco exerting a strong presence. When someone has survived Terezín, Auschwitz, Bergen-Belsen, political censure under communism, and the early music movement, with all her humour, intelligence and humanity intact, you can't argue about the hazards of smoking.

'I'm amused to be presented as a romantic, as a sort of Slavonian from far woods not knowing anything about early music,' Růžicková remarks, twinkle in eye. 'It's quite the opposite! I knew, when I went to the west,



PRAGUE LEGEND: Růžicková at her home in the Czech capital; (left) with violinist Josef Suk in the late 1980s; (top right) with her husband, the composer Viktor Kalabis, in Bratislava in 1972

that my students and I would be regarded in this way, so I was very particular that they should be in touch with all the early music developments. Maybe I was too punctilious. I once recorded some Purcell, including a little march that ended with a dominant chord. I was not sure whether to play it da capo or not, so I wrote to Thurston Dart to ask. I got a funny reply: he said he thought it would be all the same to Purcell if he had me playing. I was very moved by this.'

Růžicková was born in Plzeň in 1927 into a well-to-do family who owned a department store. She was a sickly child, suffering from

tuberculosis. 'I wanted to play the piano, but the doctor advised against it.' When she fell seriously ill with pneumonia, her parents promised to give her anything she wanted if she recovered. Her choice: 'Piano lessons.'

Her teacher soon discovered her affinity with Bach and advised her to focus on the organ or the harpsichord. 'I was too weak for the organ,' she says, 'so I chose the harpsichord, though I'd never seen or heard one.' She applied to study with Wanda Landowska in Paris. But the German invasion scuppered her plans: the Jewish community of Plzeň were among the first to be deported to Terezín, her family included.

'We were interned in barracks at first; as soon as the local population was evacuated and we could go out, I went to look for a piano,' she says. She found a beat-up instrument in an attic; music helped sustain



her through the privations of two years in the bizarrely cultured concentration camp. 'Gideon Klein, the composer, used to give me lessons; he also gave me harmony exercises to work out. He was a fantastic personality. I was singing in choirs and I was supposed to sing in Hans Krása's children's opera, *Brundibár*.' But before the premiere, she and her mother were deported to Auschwitz. Her father died in Terezín.

'We knew when we were supposed to be sent to the gas chambers,' she recounts, 'because the Nazis made us address postcards to friends or family saying we were fine, postdated for the day after. Others had done this before. We knew what had happened to them.'

On the day that would have been their last, the Allies invaded. The Nazis needed manpower, so instead of being murdered, she was sent to slave labour in Hamburg, loading bricks on to ships, throwing them

from person to person. It wrecked her hands. Finally, she and her mother were incarcerated in the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp; on its liberation she was half dead from what she says was bubonic plague.

'Bach could help me after everything I'd been through'

She insists her survival was not about courage. 'It was a hundred lucky moments,' she reflects. 'When bombs fell, you had to be lucky enough not to be underneath. But my mother was the greatest help. She lived for me; I lived for her.' And then: music. 'I tell my students that you have the capital of beautiful



concerts, poems, books, science, and nobody can take that from you. It's a world you can go into when the world outside is unbearable.'

After the war, Růžicková practised for 12 hours a day while her hands recovered. Having studied at the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague, in 1950 she gained a post there teaching piano to the composers' class. Here she met her husband. 'He was a wonderful pianist, and already into forbidden figures like Stravinsky and Bartók. We played a lot of modern music together – then we fell in love, but at first we couldn't marry because he was my student.' She tried to dissuade him from marriage because she was Jewish and subject to censure and persecution, 'but he didn't care'.

At that time in Czechoslovakia, the notion of a harpsichord career was 'a joke', she says. 'I went to the state concert agency and they laughed.' She could not afford a harpsichord and few were available to play. 'The Czech Philharmonic had one, but I wasn't allowed to use it. I would sneak in with the cleaners at 6am to practise before the staff arrived.'

She divided her time between harpsichord and piano, but eventually stuck with the former: 'I needed Bach. Unlike Beethoven, who shakes his fist at the heavens, Bach could help me after everything I'd been through. His music is above human suffering.' Her career picked up at last after she won the ARD International Music Competition in Munich in 1956.

Both Růžicková and Kalabis refused to join the Communist party and soon suffered for their stance. Kalabis was fired from his teaching job; Růžicková was forbidden to hold a post in Prague – 'How could you teach students about Bach, religion or Louis XIV without knowing how to explain them in the Marx-Lenin way?' she remarks, with

ADVICE FOR LIFE

Harpsichordist Mahan Esfahani on what he's learnt from Růžicková



TEA FOR TWO: Esfahani and Růžicková

'YOU OCCASIONALLY GET the feeling that a lot of harpsichord playing happens in spite of how deeply emotional Bach is, rather than being inspired by it. Professor Růžicková is quite the opposite of this.

'What I've learnt from her, first of all, is that having a set interpretation damages music. It's scary to walk out on stage thinking: "OK, I have ten interpretative choices for every bar to select from tonight." It's much easier to know exactly what I'm going to do. It's intimidating, not knowing, but much more liberating.

'One thing that she'll say occasionally is: "Don't forget to do X or Y, otherwise your

'She taught me that I'm not as certain as I thought I was'

colleagues will think you're an idiot!" You do it because other harpsichordists will know you've done your homework. We have a problem in Harpsichordland: we're not completely free. In Pianoland you're free, because the assumption now is that you express yourself. But if I decide to play a trill from the main note, not the upper one, there are ten jerks in the audience saying "he's stupid, he doesn't know any better...". So you have to throw them a bone. An early music person in New York wrote to me after a recital saying, "as would be expected from your personality, your interpretations were very individual". Is that supposed to mean that harpsichord interpretations shouldn't be individual? Of course they're individual!

'Růžicková taught me that I'm not as certain as I thought I was, that I'm not as good as I thought I was, and that I have to work much harder. And probably that you will never find the limits of a piece of music. There's always deeper you can go.'



FIRST EDITION:
Erato producer
Michel Garcin presents
Růžicková with her 21-LP
Bach recording in 1975

sarcasm. Financially struggling, they could not afford a harpsichord until she sourced an Ammer in the DDR, with which she travelled thereafter. She was allowed, though, to teach two students on British Council scholarships. One was Christopher Hogwood. 'He could have been a great soloist, but he already knew he was a Renaissance man, wanting also to do conducting, editing and scholarship.'

Landowska remained her ultimate ideal. What did she admire so much? 'Everything,' Růžicková beams.

'Her musicality, her consciousness of form, her personality. I loved the way she handled the harpsichord, the way she thought about the instrument. She instigated its revival.'

If there was a nemesis, it was Gustav Leonhardt. 'I never attacked him, but he wrote to János Sebestyén, saying that he knows he is my student and that only a "primitive" could think of using a 16-foot register in Bach. He was puritan about what he thought was historic. But now we know the 16-foot was authentic after all.'

The orchestral quality of her Bach recording is no coincidence. 'That was my idea,' she confirms. 'You can say, "Everybody should listen as people listened in Bach's time", but that's not realistic. I took the Landowska way, and Mahan Esfahani takes it too. I want people to understand Bach.'

'Bach worked with colour a lot in the cantatas; there the text makes it evident what he meant. It's evident in the *Well-Tempered*

Clavier too, but you have to listen! I can create the impression of different instrumentation with different registers: this makes it understandable to the listeners.

'I once published a very cheeky experiment. I took an overture from a cantata, a sinfonia with a theme of eight bars. If you study Bach, you see he didn't like symmetry. These eight bars are instrumented with three in woodwind and five in strings, so I played it three bars on the lower manual and five on the upper manual.

I showed it to a colleague and a critic.' The recipient objected to her approach. 'I said: "But this is how Bach instrumented it; it's not symmetrical."

I was not the only one who felt like that – Karl Richter used to say that anyone who had listened to the Qui Tollis in the B minor Mass would never say Bach didn't have a 16-foot stop.'

As for the future of early music, Růžicková suspects a backlash is brewing. 'I've just read about a conference in Switzerland where they were saying: "Let's liberate ourselves from the idea that we must play as the composer wanted it. Why not express how we feel, as interpreters?" This idea may follow the strict early music era. It's a possibility.'

Talking to Růžicková, you feel anything is possible. Happy birthday, then, to one of the wonders of the musical world. ■

Růžicková's recordings of the complete keyboard works of JS Bach have been re-released in a 20-CD set by Erato. See Andrew McGregor, p78

Růžicková sourced an Ammer harpsichord in the DDR

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MUSICAL DESTINATIONS

EUROPE'S NEWEST CONCERT HALL

Antwerp: Belgium

Rebecca Franks is thoroughly impressed by a spectacular looking – and sounding – brand new concert venue in Belgian's beautiful historic port city

Antwerp has been famous for many things over the years: diamonds, Rubens's paintings, shipping, its beautiful, dome-topped railway station. Now you can add another to the list: the Queen Elisabeth Concert Hall. This new 2,000-seat auditorium, home to the Royal Flemish Philharmonic, opened its doors in November. It looks good, and it sounds good too. And the Hall is just a 30-second walk from the station – with Brussels and the Eurostar, Amsterdam and Schiphol Airport just an hour by train – so a musical weekend in Antwerp is easier than you might think.

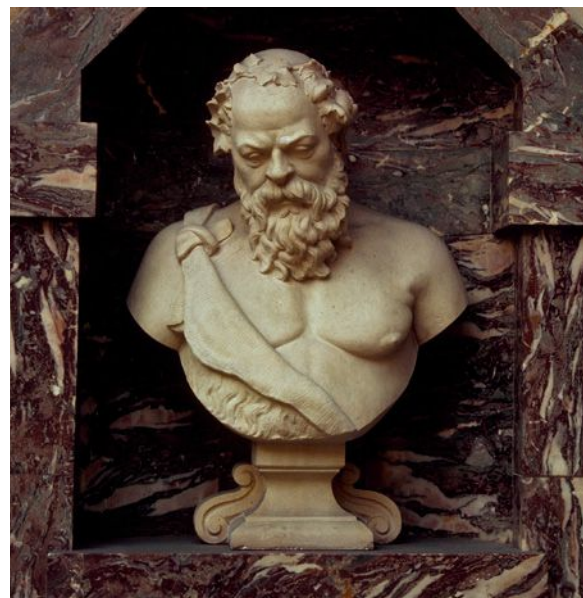
On time and on budget, the Queen Elisabeth Hall already stands apart from

Europe's other new concert venues, the Paris Philharmonie and Hamburg Elbphilharmonie. Mind you, the design is a lot simpler. British architect Ian Simpson and American acoustician Larry Kirkegaard chose a classic shoebox shape, a safe bet for good acoustics and ideal for providing good sightlines from every seat. It's light, airy and warm, with oak (seven types in layers) cladding the concrete walls (filled with lava sand to counteract vibration), and orange upholstery. When the lights go down, the subtle sheen of a few decorative metallic discs

'I think the acoustic is the best in Europe or even in the world'

just catches the eye – but this bit of whimsy is about as fussy as it gets. All this came in at €57m (£48.5m) for the hall itself, and €27m (£23m) for the rest of the building.

The auditorium nestles within an outer structure that embraces parts of older buildings on the site: a historic façade on to the city's main square and a glass-and-marble foyer that opens onto the zoo – the owner of the hall. In the 19th century, the Royal Zoological Society founded an orchestra for Antwerp; the new complex includes conference facilities for the Society's members. There are no current plans, however, to perform Saint-Saëns's *Carnival of the Animals* when I visit for the hall's opening night. Instead, it's Dvořák's Cello Concerto, with soloist Truls Mørk, and



Strauss's *Ein Heldenleben*, conducted by the orchestra's chief conductor Edo de Waart. Broadcast on Belgian radio, the concert is well received in the packed-out hall.

And the Queen Elisabeth Hall's sound is certainly superb; its defining characteristic is its warmth. There's a touch of sweetness when listening from the balcony, and a livelier, cleaner sound from the stalls. 'This acoustic gives everyone on stage the sense that their sound is larger than life,' explains Kirkegaard. 'They rarely have that experience other than in rehearsal rooms, so they're having a ball.'

The Royal Flemish Philharmonic has previously led an itinerant existence, but here it has all it needs in terms of performance, rehearsal and office space. 'I had the honour to do the very first rehearsal,' says the orchestra's principal conductor Philippe Herreweghe. 'Well, the sound was fantastic.'

LOCAL HERO

John Bull



When Rubens was at the height of his powers in Antwerp, an English composer and keyboardist arrived in the city. Somerset-born John Bull became assistant organist of Antwerp Cathedral

in 1615, and organist in 1617. He remained there until his death, and was buried in the Cathedral's cemetery. It was while in Antwerp that Bull met the Dutch composer Sweelinck, and it seems likely that he introduced him to the lute songs of fellow Brit, Dowland. In turn, Sweelinck went on to teach several composers who paved the way for the organ music of JS Bach.



HALL RISE:
the Queen Elisabeth Hall;
(below left) the bust of
Socrates at the Rubens House



TRAVEL AND REST:
Antwerp's Cathedral
of Our Lady; (left) the
domed railway station

I really think the acoustic is one of the best in Europe or even in the world, and now that I've seen the hall for the first time with the seats in, I find it beautiful too. It's a really historical step in the musical landscape in Belgium.'

With 30 concerts taking place in this first (short) season at the Queen Elisabeth Hall, there are already 45 dates in the Royal Flemish Philharmonic's diary for 2017-18. And for any cultural tourist, there are plenty of other artistic delights within walking distance. In one afternoon stroll, you can take in the neo-Baroque opera house and the Rubens House, the partly Italian-inspired 'palazzo' where the famous Baroque painter lived and worked, now a museum. And you can round it off with a visit to the Cathedral of our Lady to see Rubens's work *in situ*, including the brilliantly dramatic *Descent from the Cross*. ■

GETTY, ORJAN JAKOBSSON

ANTWERP 5 MUSICAL HIGHLIGHTS

Royal Flemish Phil: Best of British

James MacMillan conducts the premiere of his trombone concerto, with soloist Jörgen Van Rijen. Adès and Turnage complete the line-up (5 May 2017). defilharmonie.be

Philippe Herreweghe at 70

Two concerts mark the Belgian conductor's 70th, with the Orchestre des Champs-Elysées (6 May) performing Beethoven's *Eroica* and Royal Flemish Philharmonic (19 May) turning to the *Choral Ninth Symphony*. elisabethcenter.be

Handel's Agrippina

Swedish mezzo Ann Hallenberg (above) takes the lead in this Opera Vlaanderen



co-production (23 March – 4 April). Drawing inspiration from the world of soap operas, Mariame Clément directs this tale of power and greed. operaballet.be

Plantin-Moretus Museum

This fascinating museum houses the oldest surviving printing presses. Its collection includes various musical volumes plus an unusual instrument: a two-manual harpsichord/virginal hybrid. museumplantinmoretus.be

Vleeshuis Museum

This listed building (formerly the Butchers' Guild) is now devoted to the history of sound, music and dance in Antwerp; an exhibition of instruments illustrates the city's soundscape over the years. museumvleeshuis.be

CLAUDE DEBUSSY

Music's peerless scene painter

Often relying on his own imagination rather than first-hand experience, Debussy's ability to conjure up images and moods was little less than miraculous, reflects **Gerald Larner**

Debussy disliked the term 'impressionism'. He apparently still associated it with its original use by the art critic who in 1874 had taken the title of a sunrise painting by Monet, *Impression: Soleil levant*, and had used it as sarcastic evidence against the artist: 'Impression ... what freedom, what ease of workmanship! A preliminary drawing for a wallpaper pattern is more finished than this seascape.'

When the artists themselves quite happily adopted the term, however, it lost its pejorative sense. We are less clear about what it means when applied to music rather than visual art, but we have a useful general idea and we certainly would not accuse Debussy's 'impressionist' works of being perfunctory, sketchy, ill-defined or unfinished. There is no more vivid demonstration of the precision of his engagement of the listener's other senses than the reaction of the Spanish composer Manuel de Falla to the piano piece 'Soirée dans Grenade' from *Estampes* (1903). 'The music evokes,' he said, 'reflections of moonlit images on the limpid water of the large ponds that adorn the Alhambra.'

When he wrote that (in the Debussy memorial edition of *La Revue musicale*, 1920), Falla knew that Debussy had never seen the Alhambra, had never been to Granada and had set foot in Spain only once, on a quick trip across the border to see a bullfight in San-Sébastien. All Falla had to go on in 'Soirée dans Grenade' was the title and, carried by a changeable evening breeze, the local colour represented by a distant flamenco lament, the nearer throbbing of a guitar, a vigorous dance close at hand, the clacking of castanets towards the end and, running through much of it, the languorous rhythm of the habanera (or 'the Andalusian tango' as Falla termed it).

There is no 'limpid water' in 'Soirée dans Grenade' but Falla's perception of it is an

DEBUSSY'S STYLE



Globally inspired
Flamenco was not the only formative experience met by Debussy at the 1899 Exposition Universelle. He was enraptured too by the sound of the Javanese gamelan, its rhythms, its complex counterpoint and above all the

pentatonic harmonies which, like whole-tone harmonies, liberated him from thinking in diatonic terms.

Russian influences

Debussy didn't need to take a close interest in Russian music to discover the potential of the whole-tone scale (a scale of six notes, each a tone apart), even though it was the most likely source of his inspiration. He had a posthumous ally in Musorgsky (above), whose example is represented most clearly in Debussy's *La cathédrale engloutie* and most valuably in *Pelléas et Mélisande*.

Across the Channel

Debussy's long-term taste for British culture was represented at an early stage by the highly coloured *Marche écossaise sur un thème populaire* and in his maturity by the magical 'Gigues' in the orchestral *Images*. Shakespeare, Barrie and Dickens all inspired piano *préludes*, the last of them possessing an unmistakably British sound.

A touch of jazz

One of the first European composers to take an interest in jazz, or ragtime as it was then known, Debussy delighted in it in 'Golliwog's Cakewalk' from *Children's Corner*, in the closely related *Le petit nègre* and in two entertaining piano *Préludes*, *Minstrels* and *General Lavine-eccentric*.

indication of how irresistibly suggestive Debussy's music is to a sympathetic ear.

Falla was privileged in that he was not only an admirer but also a friend who had won the older composer's confidence. Although he found that he had more in common with Ravel, he got to know Debussy well enough to understand something of how the older composer could so magically achieve Spanish 'truth without authenticity' – by which Falla meant a precise sense of place without recourse to Spanish folk song.

He had learned that Debussy had heard flamenco at first hand at the Expositions Universelles in Paris in 1889 and 1900: 'So much imagination mingled with so much rhythm,' Debussy observed. He was aware too of Debussy's enthusiasm for Albéniz's *Iberia* and Chabrier's *España* (and his rather grudging interest in Ravel's *Habanera*). And he knew about his collaborations with the Spanish pianist Ricardo Viñes, who was his favoured interpreter, and of his admiration for Soles Miguel Llobert, the Catalan guitarist. Llobert sometimes played for Debussy and it is perhaps his sound that echoes not only in 'Soirée dans Grenade' but also in two other, similarly evocative piano pieces, *La Sérénade interrompue* from *Préludes* Book 1 (1910) and *La Puerta del vino* from *Préludes* Book 2 (1913) – the latter inspired by a picture-postcard view of the Alhambra sent to the composer by Falla.

But while Debussy's experience of Spanish music is obviously important, it does not explain his success in communicating so precisely the atmosphere of places in Andalusia he had never seen. Questioned on this subject, Francis Poulenc said that 'he was able to imagine Spain thanks to his remarkable intuition,' which is true enough but only half-way there. 'The fact is,' Debussy once remarked, 'that the beauty of a work of



ILLUSTRATION: RISKO

LIFE & TIMES

A quick guide to the main events in the life of **Claude Debussy**

THE LIFE 1862 THE TIMES



1862

Achille-Claude Debussy is born on 22 August in Saint-Germain-en-Laye, near Paris. His father owns a china shop and his mother is a seamstress.

1873

Making rapid progress as a pianist, he enters the **PARIS CONSERVATOIRE AT 11**. While there, Tchaikovsky's patron Nadezhda von Meck employs him as a teacher to her children, and introduces him to music by Russian composers.

1884

His cantata *L'Enfant prodigue* wins him the prestigious Prix de Rome, leading to a period of study in the Italian capital, where he meets Liszt and Verdi.

1894

His orchestral work **PRÉLUDE À L'APRÈS-MIDI D'UN FAUNE** proves a major success at its premiere, but also raise eyebrows due to its groundbreaking lack of musical structure.

1904

He causes a scandal by abandoning his wife, Lilly Texier, who attempts suicide, for the singer **EMMA BARDAC**. They later have a daughter, Claude-Emma.



1912

The impresario Serge Diaghilev commissions him to write the ballet *Jeu*, set in a tennis court at dusk. It receives a lukewarm reception at its Paris premiere the following year.

1918

As German artillery pounds Paris, he dies of colon cancer on 25 March, aged 55.



1862

Victor Hugo's historical novel **LES MISÉRABLES**, which describes lives of poverty and severe deprivation suffered in early 19th-century Paris, is published.

1873

Three years after his defeat at the Battle of Sedan in the Franco-Prussian War and subsequent dethronement, Napoleon III of France dies in exile in England.

1884

At a ceremony in Paris on 4 July, the recently completed Statue of Liberty is formally handed over by the French government to US ambassador Levi P Morton.



1894

Soon after giving a speech at a banquet in Lyon, the popular French president Marie François Sadi Carnot is stabbed and killed by Italian anarchist **SANTE GERONIMO CASERIO**.

1904

Spending the summer in St Tropez with fellow artists Paul Signac and Henri-Edmond Cross, Henri Matisse paints his *Luxe, Calme et Volupté*, later regarded as a seminal work of Fauvism.



1912

US pilot **HARRIET QUIMBY** becomes the first woman to fly over the English Channel. Because the feat coincides with the *Titanic* disaster, it receives little attention.

1918

With thousands of US soldiers arriving in France and its navy on strike, Germany accepts it cannot win World War I. An armistice is signed on 11 November.

1918

art will always be a mystery, that is to say that one will never be able to work out "how it's done". It is interesting to speculate even so.

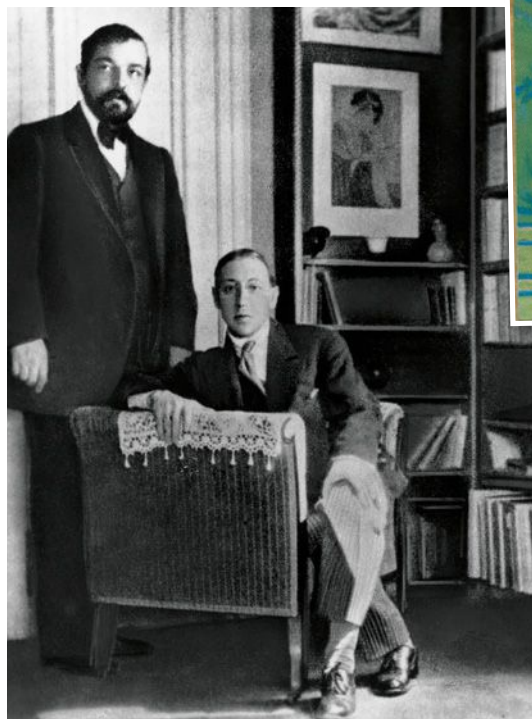
Part of the answer must be in Debussy's extraordinarily sensitive harmonic imagination – which was as liberated as that of any of his contemporaries and used in a way entirely his own – linked in his piano pieces with its expression through a unique understanding of the instrument. 'One must forget that the piano has hammers,' was his frequent advice to pianists. According to the composer Alfredo Casella, who played piano duos with him, 'his sensibility of touch was incomparable; he made the impression of playing directly on the strings of the instrument with no intermediate mechanism: the effect was a miracle of poetry. Moreover, he used the pedals in a way all his own. He played, in a word, like no other composer or pianist' – with the possible exception, it is tempting to add, of Chopin.

Much though Debussy loved Chopin, it is difficult to find traces of a direct influence of the Polish composer in his music. A case has been made for a relationship between

'Debussy played like no other composer or pianist,' said Casella

Chopin's *Barcarolle* and Debussy's *L'Isle joyeuse* but the earlier work is so serene and other so passionate that the idea is far from convincing. And any comparison between Chopin's nocturnes and Debussy's orchestral *Nocturnes*, which Debussy declared had nothing to do with the usual form of the nocturne, would be fruitless.

'It was very late at night on the Pont de Solférino,' said Debussy of the origin of 'Nuages', the first movement of *Nocturnes* (1899). 'I was leaning on the balustrade of the bridge. The Seine without a ripple like a tarnished mirror. Clouds passed slowly in a moonless sky, many clouds, neither too heavy nor too light: just clouds.' That experience of observing the 'slow and melancholy progress of the clouds' led to one of the most beautiful and most imaginative of all his orchestral pieces, one that is effectively offset in the next movement by the glowing torchlight procession of 'Fêtes' set in the Bois de Boulogne. Sadly, the third movement, 'Sirènes' with female chorus, seems anomalous in this Parisian company. Otherwise *Nocturnes* might have been the ultimate masterpiece of orchestral impressionism. That title must go to *La mer* (1905), which reconciles the irreconcilable



PARIS MATCH: (far left) Debussy with Stravinsky, whose *Rite of Spring* overshadowed the premiere of the French composer's own *Jeux*; (left) Valentine Gross's sketch of *Jeux*, as performed (below left) by Nijinsky

Jeux was Debussy's last orchestral score and, partly because of the war that began weeks after its first performance and partly because of his terminally failing health, his music underwent a fundamental change. This is not to say the piano *Etudes* (1915) are less imaginative than the *Préludes* or that the three sonatas (1915–17) – patriotically inspired by French Baroque precedent – are less lovable than the String Quartet of 1894. But when Falla wrote his memorial *Homenaje* for guitar in 1920, it was the composer of *Ibéria* and *Soirée dans Grenade* he so movingly recalled. ■

BBC RADIO 3 *Composer of the Week* is broadcast on Radio 3 at 12pm, Mon to Fri, repeated at 6.30pm.

Upcoming programmes are:

2-6 January *Schoenberg*

9-13 January *Sibelius*

16-20 January *Beethoven*

19-27 January *Rossini*

30 Jan – 3 Feb *Britten*

by building a three-movement symphonic structure with impressionist material.

As for an impressionist opera, by the very nature of the form there cannot be one. But without Debussy's impressionist genius, his one opera, *Pelléas et Mélisande* (1902) would be much less compelling. It's not just a matter of his accomplishment in extending the five orchestral interludes when it became clear at a late stage in the rehearsal that they were not long enough to accommodate the scene changes. It's more to do with his precise command of atmosphere in key scenes such as the opening of the work where Golaud, trapped in the Dorian mode, cannot find his way out of the forest. Or there's the radiant scene with *Pelléas* and *Mélisande* by the well where she so cheerfully and yet so fatally loses Golaud's wedding ring, or the sinister one later in the second act in the grotto where the sea is more of a reality than even in *Sirènes*, or the terrifyingly dark episode in the castle vaults in the third act followed by the release into the fresh air of the following interlude.

There is, though, an impressionist ballet. Debussy's *Jeux* has never recovered from the misfortune of a first performance in the Ballets Russes season at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées in 1913. In the same theatre only two weeks later the same company gave the first performance of Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring*, the notoriously riotous reception of which obliterated every other artistic event in the consciousness of the musical world. Not that *Jeux* would have been a popular success even in the most favourable of circumstances.

Nijinsky's choreography – which, according to Marie Rambert, was based on 'sort of stylised sports movements' – might, in theory, have been well conceived for a ballet set beside a tennis court. In practice, it was so alien to the music that even the composer left before it was over to smoke a cigarette with the concierge in the foyer.

At the same time Debussy must have been aware that, even if the choreography had been brilliant, *Jeux* was not the kind of work that would have gone straight to the hearts of the Parisian public, in spite of its teasingly erotic atmosphere. Although, in his uncertainty about writing ballet music, he seems to have referred to recent examples by Stravinsky, Dukas and Ravel – all of whom are echoed in the score – *Jeux* is like no other ballet music.

Cast in one continuous movement, this 'poème dansé' has no set pieces and follows no recognisable structural pattern. Even the symmetrical return of the prelude in the closing bars would not have happened if Diaghilev had not insisted that the ballet should end in the same way as it begins. It is a score abundant in thematic ideas and yet few of even the most melodious of them are given much exposure or development. While one little theme recurs in an endless variety of transformations, the motivation is entirely spontaneous, the atmosphere and events of the scenario reflected in miraculously subtle orchestration, daringly liberated harmonies and infinitely supple rhythms. However often one hears it, the score remains an inexhaustible source of fascination.

CLAUDE DEBUSSY

RECOMMENDED RECORDINGS



Préludes

Alexei Lubimov (piano)

ECM 476 4735

Lubimov thrills and beguiles in these hugely characterful performances of Debussy's famous solo piano works.



Orchestral works

Royal Scottish National Orchestra/Stéphane Denève

Chandos CHSA5102(2)

From *La Mer* to *Images*, this is a sumptuous, seductive Debussy orchestral set.



Pelléas et Mélisande

Jacques Jansen, Irène Joachim etc; Chœurs

Yvonne Gouverné, Orchestre Symphonique/Roger Désormière

Warner 345 7702

For shimmering atmosphere, Désormière's 1941 recording remains unsurpassed.



Violin Sonata

Kyung-Wha Chung (violin), Radu Lupu (piano)

Decca 421 1542

A gloriously fresh and energetic performance, recorded in 1977.

BUILDING A LIBRARY

SHEHERAZADE

Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov

Immersing himself in orchestral tales of oriental sailors and princes, **Daniel Jaffé** selects the recordings that would seduce the sternest of sultans

Few of Rimsky-Korsakov's works demonstrate his skill in innovative and colourful orchestration more comprehensively than his well-loved symphonic suite composed in 1888, based on the Persian collection of stories *One Thousand and One Nights*. Rimsky's four-movement work begins and ends with Sheherazade herself (represented by solo violin) and the Sultan whom she persuades, through her skilful storytelling, to put off his intention to execute her on the morning after their wedding night. Yet generally Rimsky evokes rather than fully depicts scenes or dramatic episodes from Sheherazade's tales: as he explained in his autobiography, the titles he gave each movement are intended to 'direct but slightly' the listener's imagination. Conductors and their orchestras have therefore to navigate a course between vivid fantasy on one side, and respect for the work's symphonic qualities on the other, ideally avoiding the temptation to treat *Sheherazade* as a mere showcase for orchestral virtuosity.



Thomas Beecham
(conductor)
Steven Staryk (violin);
Royal Philharmonic
Orchestra (1957)
Warner Classics 566 9832
(download only)

THE BEST RECORDING **THOMAS BEECHAM**

BEECHAM FIRST CONDUCTED *Sheherazade*, at the impresario Diaghilev's invitation, for the Ballets Russes's 1912 London season. His affection for the work remained keen as ever, 45 years later, when he made this recording with his own Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. With both conductor and orchestra fully engaged with the music's drama, this recording is the most consistently engaging of any available. For an idea of its quality, try 'The Young Prince and the Young Princess' – too many performances overload its opening melody with yearning ardour, giving it nowhere further to go expressively; Beecham's restrained and flowing



account enables one to appreciate the love theme's beauty. Only with the theme's repetition, now played by expressive cellos and cor anglais, does he allow the pace to linger ever so slightly to suggest the growing passion between the young lovers. (It's a pity he takes so long over that movement's coda with its Janissary-style percussion, contrary to Rimsky's instruction.) The fiercer episodes – whether the baleful brass fanfares in 'The Story of the Kalender Prince', or the exciting finale, its ferocious start recalling the finale of Berlioz's *Harold in Italy* – are equally superb. The recording quality, excellent for its time, outclasses either of the 1960s alternatives listed here, and enhances this compelling performance.



BBC RADIO 3 Building a Library is broadcast on BBC Radio 3 at 9.30am each Saturday as part of Record Review. A highlights podcast is available at www.bbc.co.uk/radio3

just a nose ahead of Charles Mackerras with the LSO, whose mostly superb performance is let down by a prosaic first movement and Telarc's surprisingly sub-standard sound. In this live performance, the Toronto Symphony is shown to be world-class, its ensemble and technical excellence surpassing all other front-runners here. Yet it has both drama and poetry, with 'The Kalender Prince' in particular building to an exciting climax followed by a lovely aftermath, with fluttering strings supporting the flute solo and distant horn melody, both beautifully played. If only there were more menace in both the Kalender fanfares or the 'Festival in Baghdad'.

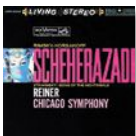


Evgeny Svetlanov (conductor)

Heinrich Friedheim (violin); USSR Symphony Orchestra (1969)

Melodiya MEL CD 10 00180 (download only)
Technically, the USSR Symphony Orchestra was not on the exalted level of the Leningrad Symphony at that time – there's some sour tuning lurking among the rank-and-file players – but it boasted some principal soloists who play all the opening movement's ensemble passages superbly. Conductor Svetlanov is always alive to the music's drama and character, whether in the ferocious 'Festival in Baghdad', or the first movement's twilight end. He is also alert to the symphonic elements, highlighting in the third movement how the Janissary march theme emerges from the lovers' music. Allowing for a certain lack of refinement, this is most convincing in showing the score's drama and musical structure.

THREE MORE GREAT RECORDINGS



Fritz Reiner (conductor)
Sydney Harth (violin); Chicago Symphony Orchestra (1960)
Sony 88697700362

Reiner's performances can appear meticulous and rather unyielding, but his account of *Sheherazade* is both entertaining and touching, qualities appropriate to the original stories. 'The Sea and Sinbad's Ship' is swift, yet Reiner's purposeful account makes it cohere into a compelling and almost symphonic piece while also conjuring the sensation of a vast ocean. He also finds unexpected humour in 'The Kalender Prince': after a build-up of tension, Reiner's sudden change of gear to a

slower tempo – marked in Rimsky's score – heightens the pompous swagger of the march that follows. The young lovers are touchingly portrayed, the string tone hushed and artfully hesitant, and the theme's lingering return after the procession poignant in its effect. Only the over-fast 'Shipwreck' rather breaks the spell.

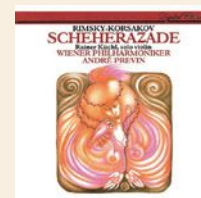


Peter Oundjian (conductor)
Jonathan Crow (violin); Toronto Symphony Orchestra (2013)
Chandos CHSA 5145

(hybrid CD/SACD)

For those wanting a good performance in a digital recording, this is probably the best bet,

AND ONE TO AVOID...



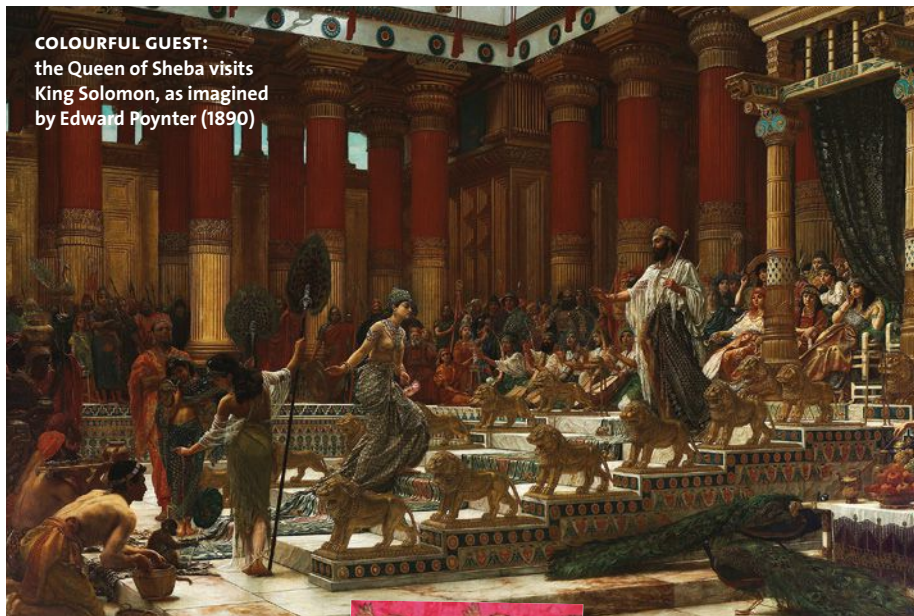
Even jaded orchestral players know their honour is at stake if they can't make a fair fist of *Sheherazade*. Some pundits, perhaps making

assumptions based on reputations, have cited the Vienna Philharmonic under André Previn as a 'top choice' for this work. The orchestra at least produces a lovely sound, but betrays the players' lack of enthusiasm with less than razor-sharp ensemble and a general lack of fire or poetry.

If you enjoy Rimsky-Korsakov's *Sheherazade* and would like to try out similar works, see overleaf...

SO, WHERE NEXT...?

We suggest works to explore after Rimsky-Korsakov's *Sheherazade*



COLOURFUL GUEST:
the Queen of Sheba visits
King Solomon, as imagined
by Edward Poynter (1890)

time in the Georgian capital are evident in his two four-movement *Caucasian Sketches* suites (1894-96). In the first suite, a grand orchestral sweep evokes a mountainous terrain and, in the finale, a Janissary-like march introduces us to a Persian military commander. The second suite's moods range from the opening 'Lamentation of Princess Ketevana' to the scurrying 'Lezhinka Dance' of the third movement.

Recommended recording:

BBC Philharmonic/Fedor Glushchenko
Chandos CHAN 9321

Respighi *Belkis, Queen of Sheba*

Another composer to enjoy the guidance of Rimsky-Korsakov was Respighi, who studied with the great man while employed as principal violinist at the Russian Imperial Theatre in 1900. Thirty years on, the Italian produced this exotic, and erotic, ballet, based on the story of the eponymous queen's visit to King Solomon. Typically for Respighi, it employs a huge orchestra in a score that is full of sensuous chromaticism and dazzling colour. Respighi later condensed the ballet into a four-movement suite that begins with 'Solomon's Dream' (of the beautiful Belkis, of course) and ends with the 'Orgiastic Dance'.

Recommended recording (suite): Borusan Istanbul Philharmonic/Sascha Goetzel
Onyx ONYX4048

John Adams *Scheherazade.2*

An exhibition about *The Arabian Nights* at Paris's Arab World Institute moved US composer John Adams to explore brutality towards women in the Middle East and elsewhere. This 2015 work casts his Scheherazade as an 'empowered, liberated spirit', embodied by a solo violin role *à la* Rimsky, and moments of atmosphere and sensuality mix with menacing undercurrents and violent energy. Like Rimsky-Korsakov, Adams gives each movement of his dramatic-symphony a title: 'Tale of the Wise Young Woman – Pursuit by the True Believers'; 'A Long Desire (Love Scene)'; 'Scheherazade & The Men with Beards'; and 'Escape, Flight, Sanctuary'.

Recommended recording: Leila Josefowicz (violin); St Louis Symphony/David Robertson
Nonesuch 7559794351

Rimsky-Korsakov *Antar*

This colourful symphonic fantasy is, like *Sheherazade*, also based on an Arabian folk legend. It tells the story of Antar's adventures in the Syrian desert, his rescue of the Queen of Palmyra, Gul Nazar, and her reward to him of Three Joys: Vengeance, Power and Love. Influenced by the oriental and folk styles of Balakirev's tone poem *Tamara*, Rimsky's luxurious, chromatically winding music also pays a nod to Berlioz, with *idées fixes* to identify each character. The stunningly imaginative final movement, in which Antar falls in love with Gul Nazar and dies in her arms, looks forward to the technicolor landscapes of *Sheherazade* 20 years later.

Recommended recording: Gothenburg Symphony/Neeme Järvi DG 459 5122

Borodin

In the Steppes of Central Asia

To celebrate his silver jubilee in 1880, Alexander II commissioned Borodin to write a symphonic poem. That the Tsar had spent much of those 25 years expanding Russia eastwards provided Borodin with the ideal opportunity to combine two musical traditions: *In the Steppes of Central Asia* describes an eastern caravan and Russian troops travelling across a desert. A *pizzicato* strings ostinato keeps the music constantly plodding along, while a twisting, ornamented 'Eastern' melody evoking the caravan



intertwines with the heroic 'Russian' melody that opens the work. You can imagine every character, sense the vastness of the space and imagine yourself in Borodin's colourful world.

Recommended recording:

RPO/Vladimir Ashkenazy Decca E436 6512

Glazunov *Oriental Rhapsody*

Glazunov had few greater fans than Rimsky-Korsakov, who took him under his wing as a young composer. Like his mentor, not to mention several of his peers, he found himself seduced by exoticism, as can be heard in this five-movement orchestral work from 1889. Those five movements take us from a town sleeping in the dead of night through to a wild orgy. Interestingly, Rimsky and Glazunov had been working on completing Borodin's unfinished *Prince Igor* shortly before the *Oriental Rhapsody* was written – was Glazunov intentionally paying homage to the late composer in his 'Dance of the Young Men and Girls' second movement?

Recommended recording: Moscow Symphony/Igor Golovschin Naxos 8.553512

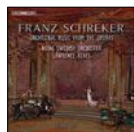
Ippolitov-Ivanov *Caucasian Sketches*

After studying with Rimsky-Korsakov at the St Petersburg Conservatory, Ippolitov-Ivanov then spent the first seven years of his career as director of the music academy in Tbilisi – the influence of both his teacher and his

Next month:
Mahler's Sixth Symphony

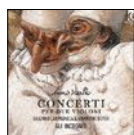
CONTENTS

56 Recording of the Month



58 Orchestral

An enticing CD of luscious Schreker from the Royal Swedish Orchestra



60 Concerto

Giuliano Carmignola and Amandine Beyer make a formidable team in Vivaldi



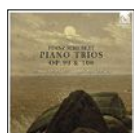
64 Opera

Wagner's *Die Walküre* takes flight with Jaap van Zweden and a fine team of singers



68 Choral

Sir Andrew Davis and his Toronto musicians present an unashamedly festive *Messiah*



72 Chamber

Andreas Staier and friends bring poise and profundity to Schubert's Piano Trios



77 Instrumental

Fenella Humphreys's second album combining Bach with contemporary is a triumph

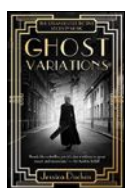
80 Brief notes

A guide to 24 new releases; plus five reissues



82 Jazz

Liberation Music Orchestra's valedictory album celebrates the bassist Charlie Haden



84 Books

Jessica Duchén's latest novel revisits the curious case of the rediscovery of Schumann's forgotten Violin Concerto

85 Audio

A guide to the best new hi-fi

BBC music REVIEWS

110 CDs, Books & DVDs rated by expert critics



Recording of the Month

Masaaki Suzuki and Bach Collegium Japan record Mozart's *Great Mass in C minor* with stunning success, paired with a dazzling account of the solo motet *Exsultate, jubilate*, p56



MOZART MASTERS:
Masaaki Suzuki and
friends record in Japan

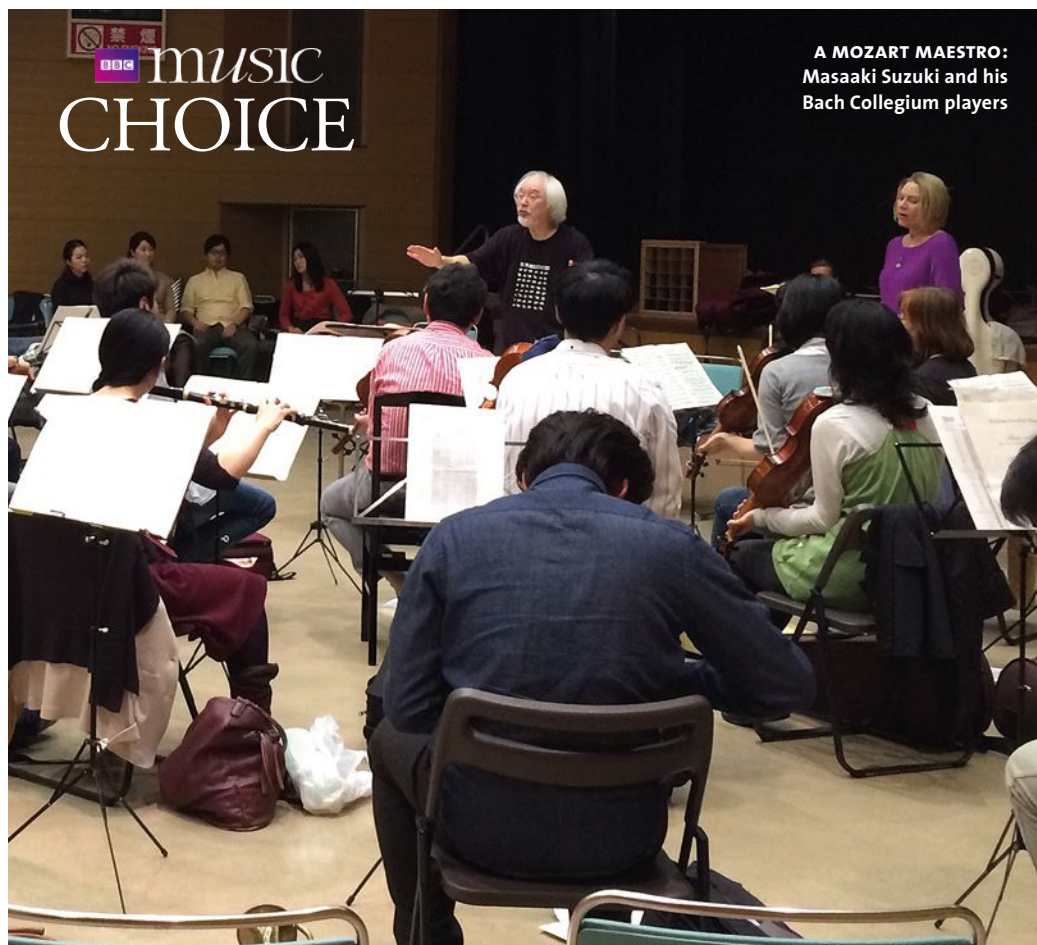
A tribute to Peter Maxwell Davies



In his last two years, the terminally ill Sir Peter Maxwell Davies spent much of his creative energy writing a children's opera, *The Hogboon*, premiered last June by Sir Simon Rattle. But like many other composers facing personal difficulties, Maxwell Davies also continued to explore the more private domains of chamber and instrumental music. His final work, in early 2016, was a movement for string quartet, which vanishes into silence. This month's Instrumental Choice features the disc premiere of the *Sonatina for Violin Alone*, Op. 334, from 2014, performed by its commissioner, the violinist Fenella Humphreys. It's based on Bach, echoes Sibelius and makes a moving elegy. **Rebecca Franks** *Reviews Editor*

Our Recording of the Month features in one of our **BBC Music Magazine** podcasts downloadable free from iTunes or from our website www.classical-music.com

RECORDING OF THE MONTH



A MOZART MAESTRO:
Masaaki Suzuki and his
Bach Collegium players

FURTHER LISTENING

Masaaki Suzuki

MOZART

Requiem; Vesperae solennes de Confessore; Tuba Mirum

Sampson, Kielland, Sakurada, Immler; Bach Collegium Japan/ Masaaki Suzuki
BIS 2091 74:34 mins



'Suzuki's recording of Mozart's Requiem is based on a new edition of the score by his son, the harpsichordist and organist Masato Suzuki. The performance is notable for its super-clean orchestral edges and refinement.' *February 2015*

JS BACH

Cantatas, Vol. 55

Blažiková, Blaze, Türk, Kooij; Bach Collegium Japan/ Masaaki Suzuki
BIS BIS-2031 68 mins



'Over 18 years Suzuki seems to have subtly changed his relationship with Bach, from a reverential approach to confident familiarity. The final Cantata of this series is uncannily apt: 'Gloria in Excelsis' indeed!' *December 2013*

JS BACH

Mass in B minor

Sampson, Nicholls, Blaze, Türk, Peter Kooij; Bach Collegium Japan/Suzuki
BIS SACD-1701-02 107:31 mins (2 discs)



'Suzuki clearly retains a deep reverence for what most of us still consider the summation and perfection of Bach's entire lifework. The warm acoustic of the Shoin Women's University Chapel lends a sheen to the sound.' *January 2008*

A stunning Mozart Mass

Berta Joncus applauds Bach Collegium Japan and Masaaki Suzuki



MOZART

Great Mass in C minor; Exsultate, jubilate

Carolyn Sampson, Olivia Vermeulen, Makoto Sakurada, Christian Immler; Bach Collegium Japan/ Masaaki Suzuki
BIS BIS-2171 (hybrid CD/SACD) 71:17 mins

Mozart, not Bach? Absolutely. Masaaki Suzuki built his choir, his period band, and his international acclaim on Bach's cantatas. Here he follows up his first recording of

Mozart – the Requiem, released last year – with stunning success. Suzuki grasps the directness of Mozart's Catholic faith. Gone are the operatic flashes found in earlier big-name Mass recordings: stripping the score right back, Suzuki makes musicianship dominate. He taps into the subtle arts of his fellow performers, especially Carolyn Sampson, to create a benchmark performance.

On 4 January 1783 Mozart wrote to his father about a half-finished Mass and the fulfilment of a promise, which modern scholars have

interpreted as an act of thanksgiving related to his wife, Constanze, who led the soloists when the C Minor Mass premiered in Salzburg later that year. This early version lacked instrumental parts, as well as the

Masaaki Suzuki seeks transparency of texture, timbre and colour

Credo and Agnus Dei. Later, after setting half the Credo, Mozart put the Mass aside. Modern conductors

have to work with orchestrations by others, and Suzuki's choice of Franz Beyer's lean 1989 score is fitting: as in his Bach recordings, Suzuki here seeks transparency of texture, timbre and colour.

This transparency allows Mozart's major ideas to crystallise no matter what tempo is set. Sometimes Suzuki slows the pulse so that harmonic pillars become massive, as in the Kyrie. Elsewhere, he has sections of his Bach Collegium orchestra and chorus scamper mischievously after each other in interjections as graceful as they are distinctive. The choir is a force of nature: even doubled in the Sanctus and Hosanna, it manages to pull slightly ahead of Suzuki's breakneck tempo to close the

movement with snap. By contrast, in 'Et incarnatus est', the sweetest of the disc's many ravishing moments, Carolyn Sampson arabesques effortlessly up to the stratosphere in a slow dance with solo woodwinds.

The three other vocal soloists equal Sampson's elegance, forging a blissful euphony in their ensembles. On what other recording of the Mass do the principal vocalists alter their timbres on demand to perfect their blend? Yet Sampson takes the palm. She concludes this disc with Mozart's solo motet *Exsultate, jubilate*. The 17-year-old Mozart wrote this for the castrato Venanzio Rauzzini, deploying this star to flaunt his own virtuosity. Sampson's

suave coloratura, and the cheeky woodwind interruptions, hint at Mozart's youthful arrogance.

The jewel of this recording is, however, the Great Mass. Suzuki shows us that Mozart, like Bach, took inspiration from praising God. However grand the choruses, however reckless the solos, Mozart's C Minor Mass draws power from its innocence – here, uniquely, restored.

PERFORMANCE

★★★★★

RECORDING

★★★★★



ON THE PODCAST

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Q&A

MASAOKI SUZUKI

The Japanese conductor tells REBECCA FRANKS about turning to Mozart after his mammoth Bach cantata project



After many years recording JS Bach, you're now on your second disc of Mozart. How have you changed your approach? Well, actually, I have kept exactly the same approach. Mozart's music obviously sounds completely different from Bach's, but it's equally beautiful, equally interesting. The Requiem and C minor Mass are some of my favourite works. I'm curious to follow the tradition of Christian music, the line from Machaut. We've recorded Monteverdi's *Missa In illo tempore*, Bach's B Minor Mass, this Mozart and we're recording Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis* next year. It's a fascinating line.

What is Mozart's musical language like in this Mass?

It's very interesting. Mozart composed this Mass for quite a personal reason, it seems, to persuade his father to accept Constanze. She was a wonderful soprano, and the soprano has an important role here. I'm not sure if it was meant for liturgical use but it has wonderful lines, structural balance, and, of course beautiful ensembles.

Where did you make the recording?

It was done in the Saitama concert hall, in a suburb of Tokyo. We regularly perform there. The former music director was a friend. He has passed away now, but he planned huge projects and was very stimulating. In Japan it's not so easy to find a very good acoustic in a church, so a concert hall is often better, especially for Classical repertoire.

And what kind of reputation does Mozart have in Japan?

Mozart is more famous than Bach. It is said that the fans of Bach and Mozart are slightly different in character. People who like Bach are often very serious and keen to learn from the music. Mozart fans are more spontaneous. He's more famous because the orchestras play his music, but apart from our work Bach is not so often performed professionally.

THIS MONTH'S CRITICS

Our critics number many of the top music specialists whose knowledge and enthusiasm are second to none



Misha Donat *producer, writer*

Misha Donat spent several years as a composer, writing music for films and for the theatre, before joining Radio 3 as a music producer. Among the many programmes he produced there were the Lunchtime Concerts at St John's, Smith Square. He now works as a freelance writer, lecturer and producer.

Rob Ainsley
critic, writer

John Allison *editor, Opera; critic, Sunday Telegraph*

Nicholas Anderson
Baroque specialist

Terry Blain
writer, critic

Kate Bolton-Porciatti *lecturer, New York University, Florence*

Garry Booth *jazz writer & critic*

Geoff Brown
critic, The Times

Anthony Burton
writer, editor

Michael Church
writer, critic, The Independent

Christopher Cook
broadcaster, critic

Elinor Cooper
journalist

Martin Cotton
radio & recording producer

Christopher Dingle
professor of music, Birmingham Conservatoire

Jessica Duchon
critic, novelist

Rebecca Franks
critic, writer

George Hall
writer, editor

Malcolm Hayes
composer, critic

Julian Haylock
writer, editor

Claire Jackson
writer, journalist

Daniel Jaffé
writer, critic

Erica Jeal *critic, The Guardian; deputy editor, Opera*

Stephen Johnson
writer, broadcaster

Berta Joncus *senior lecturer, Goldsmiths, University of London*

Erik Levi *professor, University of London*

Max Loppert
critic, Opera

Andrew McGregor
presenter, BBC Radio 3's Record Review

David Nice *writer, biographer*

Roger Nichols

French music specialist

Bayan Northcott
writer, composer

Anna Picard
writer, critic

George Pratt
emeritus professor of music, University of Huddersfield

Anthony Pryer
lecturer, Goldsmiths, University of London

Paul Riley
journalist, critic

Jan Smaczny
professor of music, Queen's University, Belfast

Geoffrey Smith
presenter, BBC Radio 3's Geoffrey Smith's Jazz

Michael Tanner
critic, The Spectator

Roger Thomas
jazz critic

Kate Wakeling
writer, researcher

Helen Wallace
writer, critic

Barry Witherden
writer, critic

Key to symbols Star ratings are provided for both the performance itself and either the recording's sound quality or a DVD's presentation

Outstanding ★★★★★

Excellent ★★★★

Good ★★★

Disappointing ★★

Poor ★

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ORCHESTRAL

Valery Gergiev reveals the coherence and sense – if not the sensibility – of Bruckner and Mahler; and the conductorless *Les Dissonances* brings chamber music finesse to Shostakovich

BBC MUSIC ORCHESTRAL CHOICE

Seduced by Schreker

Erik Levi relishes the Austrian composer's voluptuous orchestral mastery



SCHREKER

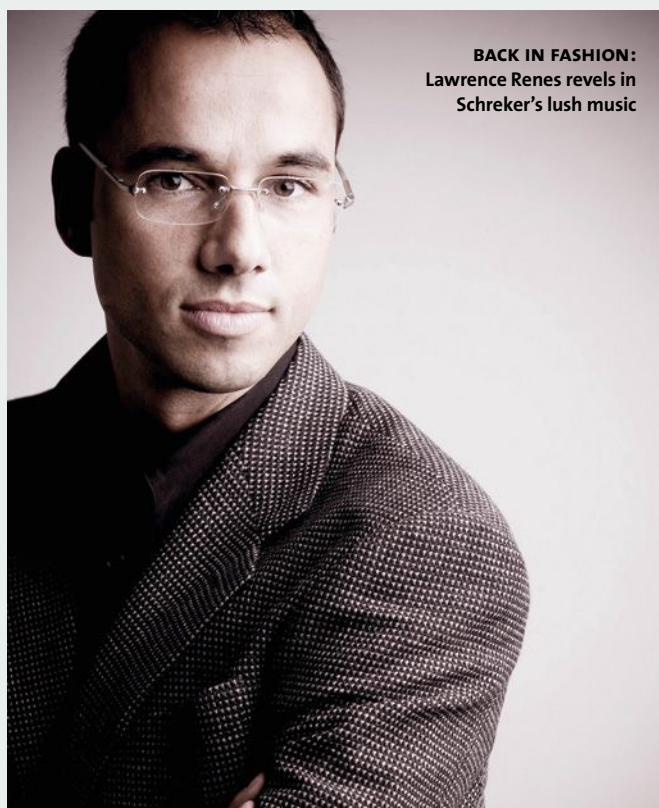
Der Schatzgräber – Symphonic interlude; Die Gezeichneten – Prelude; Das Spielwerk – Prelude; Der ferne Klang – Nachstück; Vorspiel zu einer grossen Oper
Royal Swedish Orchestra/
Lawrence Renes
BIS BIS-2212 (hybrid CD/SACD)
68:30 mins

Few 20th-century composers have suffered more from the vicissitudes of fashion than Franz Schreker. Hailed in the period following the First World War as the most significant figure in German opera since Wagner, Schreker and his voluptuous, erotically charged music quickly fell out of favour as the artistic environment in the

Schreker combines Wagnerian passion with Debussyan subtlety

Weimar Republic moved towards a more austere and objective mode of expression. Thereafter, Hitler's accession to power dealt the final blow to any possible revival of interest in his work, and the composer was now branded as a degenerate.

Yet Schreker's influence surely lived on in the very different environment of the Hollywood blockbusters of the 1930s and '40s. Any listener doing a blind tasting of the five operatic preludes and interludes featured here would be justified in believing this was high-



BACK IN FASHION:
Lawrence Renes revels in Schreker's lush music

quality film music, even though it was actually conceived many years before sound cinema was a reality.

Perhaps the most striking aspect of these excerpts is their sensuality of sonority, confirming without question that Schreker was an absolute master of the orchestra. He synthesises a passionately chromatic *Tristan*-esque musical language with a subtlety of timbre that places him close to Debussy. Lawrence Renes and the Royal Swedish Orchestra revel in the music's extravagance, delivering strongly committed

and full-blooded performances supported by a crystal-clear recording that allows you to hear every detail in these intricate scores. Anyone who has a weakness for early Schoenberg, Zemlinsky and Korngold will want to hear this disc.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
RECORDING ★★★★★



ON THE WEBSITE

Hear extracts from this recording and the rest of this month's choices on the **BBC Music Magazine website**
www.classical-music.com



BERLIOZ

Symphonie fantastique
Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra/
Daniele Gatti
RCO Live RCO 16006 (hybrid CD/SACD)
57:30 mins

I've previously enjoyed Daniele Gatti's conducting, especially in operatic Strauss and Wagner, so his approach to Berlioz's breakthrough work aroused real expectation. To keep his perceptions pure, he tells us in the booklet notes, Gatti avoided other interpretations but gave serious thought to the score, with its sometimes problematic instrumentation, and to its self-dramatising, theatrical character. It's almost a wordless opera.

The resulting performance is less convincing. Gatti's reading is poised and energetic, lucid and detailed. Its unconventional emphasis on scene-painting over sweeping gesture yields some fascinating results in the opening movements, especially the 'Scène aux champs'. But he's less successful with the visionary elements, vigorous but insufficiently demonic; the 'Marche au supplice' is somewhat heavy-handed, and the 'Sabbat' isn't orgiastic enough.

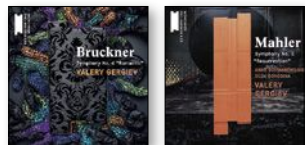
The Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra's characteristic burnished sheen and the mellow restrained horns, spaciouly captured by the SACD recording, is a touch too urbane for Berliozian intensity. It's an intriguing performance, but it doesn't really equal Robin Ticciati's chamber-orchestra insights (on Linn), passionate, large-scale recordings from Sirs Colin Davis (LSO Live) and Thomas Beecham (Warner Classics), or period-instrument versions like Sir John Eliot Gardiner's (on Decca). Furthermore, this disc seems rather short measure, especially as the DVD and Blu-Ray versions (also on RCO Live) include Liszt's *Orpheus* and Wagner's *Tannhäuser*.

overture, comprising a coherent programme about artistic struggle.

Michael Scott Rohan

PERFORMANCE
RECORDING

★★★★
★★★★



BRUCKNER

Symphony No. 4 (Romantic)

Munich Philharmonic/Valery Gergiev
Münchner Philharmoniker 9305211208
68:21 mins

MAHLER

Symphony No. 2 (Resurrection)

Anne Schwanewilms (soprano), Olga Borodina (mezzo); Munich Philharmonic Choir & Orchestra/Valery Gergiev
Münchner Philharmoniker 9305211204
80:56 mins

It's hard to know how to star-rate performances like these. Take my final four as standing somewhere between five for intellectual conviction and three for emotional engagement. If you have doubts about the coherence of either of these symphonies, then Valery Gergiev should not only still them, but convince you that these are both magnificently original structures, purposeful from first to last, however many sidesteps or pauses for reflection there may be along the way. If, on the other hand, you like your Mahler and/or Bruckner

full of ardour, heavenly vistas and sweetly touching folk colouring, then Gergiev's austere single-mindedness will neither stir nor charm. Mahler's notorious sardonic humour doesn't come across very vividly either: there may be a dark edginess in the playing at times, but not much acid.

Both performances held me as musical narratives, and yet I can't remember being so un-stirred by Mahler's quietly climactic 'Bereite dich zu leben!' ('Prepare yourself to live!') in a long time – and that isn't just because Olga Borodina's intonation sags towards the end of the phrase. It reminds me a little of Karajan at his paradoxical best/worst: magnificently convincing in its artistic overview, rather less persuasive when it comes to what Henry James called the 'sharpness of human contact.'

Stephen Johnson

PERFORMANCE
RECORDING

★★★★
★★★★



GINASTERA

Panambi; Piano Concerto No. 2

Xiayin Wang (piano); Manchester Chamber Choir; BBC Philharmonic/Juanjo Mena

Chandos CHAN 10923 69:07 mins

Volume 2 of this landmark Chandos series, released at the end of Ginastera's centenary year in 2016, unites his first published work, the 'choreographic legend' *Panambi*, with the much later Piano Concerto No. 2. *Panambi* dates from the mid-1930s when Ginastera was still a student, and for an Op. 1 it's fairly astonishing, especially in this never-before-recorded version with choral conclusion (he was nothing if not ambitious). A supernatural love story, it sounds a little like an Argentinian *Rite of Spring* with bits of *Daphnis et Chloé* thrown in. The Piano Concerto No. 2 (1972) is equally ambitious, but serialist while also referencing Beethoven: it opens with a huge set of variations on a tone-row derived from a chord in the Symphony No. 9 and features a slow movement marked 'Quasi una fantasia'.

The juxtaposition highlights the transformation of Ginastera's style across the decades. Most fascinating, though, is that despite the language being different, the voice is the same: driving, often volcanic energy, continual exploration and adventure, rapt moments of mystery and ingenious orchestration bristling with percussion.

The BBC Philharmonic and Juanjo Mena heroically navigate the complex textures and intense atmospheres with both finesse and aplomb. Xiayin Wang rises to the Piano Concerto's challenges, bringing to it a fulsome tone plus meticulous detail. She has apparently disobeyed the instruction to play the *scherzo* with left hand alone (though I don't blame her). *Jessica Duchen*

PERFORMANCE

RECORDING

★★★★
★★★★



SHOSTAKOVICH

Cello Concerto No. 1;

Symphony No. 5

Xavier Phillips (cello); Les Dissonances
Dissonances Records LD 009 76:19 mins

How interesting that the conductorless, self-proclaimed 'artistic collective' Les Dissonances should move into 20th-century Russian repertoire, emulating the Russian Persimfans ('First Symphony Orchestra without conductor') which briefly flourished in the 1920s. Chamber music writ large is certainly what we get from principal cellist Xavier Phillips, soloist in Shostakovich's First Cello Concerto before going back to the orchestra proper for the Fifth Symphony. Those exchanges with a superb first horn, the concertante oboes, the trenchant, scary, hollow clarinet in the finale: all this adds up to high-level teamwork. And Phillips's imprimatur as a Rostropovich pupil – he writes very eloquently on the relationship in a fine, albeit badly-proofed, booklet article – is heard in the focused engagement, the whispered intimacy with which the cadenza begins and above all the powerful-sweet sound in highest register.

For the symphony, leader David Grimal ups the string forces. What a pity that the forward, clear recording balks at climaxes, which hampers the first-movement development. The final pyrrhic victory just sounds wrong: suddenly fast and as light as the players can make it, as if trying to cover up its deliberate banality. But there are many strong, unique features, starting with a peerless oboe solo that is given space to manoeuvre. The other woodwind shine and the strings in the slow movement build from vibrato-free antique style to as intense a climax as any I've heard.

David Nice

PERFORMANCE

RECORDING

★★★★
★★★★

REISSUES

Reviewed by Michael Tanner

BEETHOVEN

Symphonies Nos 1 & 7

Vienna Philharmonic/
Nikolaus Harnoncourt
Orfeo 924 161 B (2003) 69:46 mins



The chief surprise of these Salzburg performances is how unsurprising they are, almost free of

Harnoncourt's usual idiosyncrasies or perversities. Really rather dull.

PERFORMANCE

RECORDING

★★★★
★★★★

BEETHOVEN

Symphonies Nos 3, 5 & 7

SCHUBERT

Symphony No. 5

Israel Philharmonic Orchestra,
Vienna Philharmonic/Georg Solti
Eloquence 480 6596 (1959) 147:36 mins



These recordings from the end of the 1950s are characteristic of Solti's tense hard-driven style, in the case of Schubert's Fifth ridiculously so. Beethoven's *Eroica* and No. 7 fare better, but No. 5 is aggressive to a fault.

PERFORMANCE

RECORDING

★★
★★★★

SCHUMANN

Symphony No. 3 (arr. Mahler)

TCHAIKOVSKY

Symphony No. 2

Philharmonia/Carlo Maria Giulini
Praga Digital PRD 350 135 (1956-58)
75:28 mins



The main interest here is the recording of Mahler's re-write of the *Rhenish* Symphony, hardly required, but one hears what Mahler thought Schumann should have written. The *Little Russian* gets a spruce outing too.

PERFORMANCE

RECORDING

★★★★
★★★★

HERBERT VON KARAJAN

Works by Tchaikovsky, Berlioz,
Liszt, Sibelius, Maria von Weber

Philharmonia/Herbert von Karajan
Minuet 428420 (1958-59) 77:13 mins



This is a useful disc of warhorses, played with all the stops out, but luscious as well as fierce in the conductor's best period.

Wonderful Tchaikovsky and Sibelius in particular.

PERFORMANCE

RECORDING

★★★★
★★★★

BACKGROUND TO...



Alberto Ginastera

(1916-83)

Born in Buenos Aires, Ginastera first made an impact with the 1937

performance of the suite from his ballet *Panambi* (1934-6), followed by a successful staging of the ballet in 1940. This led to his writing his now best known work, the ballet *Estancia*, in 1941. From the 1950s he adopted the 12-tone technique, and also used microtones and polytonality. He founded and was music director of the Centre for Advanced Music Studies in Buenos Aires, 1962-9. After the 'Argentine Revolution', Ginastera left the country, finally settling in Geneva in 1971.

CONCERTO

Violinist *Leila Josefowicz* gives a fully committed account of John Adams's *Scheherazade.2*; plus a double helping of Mozart flute concertos from *Philippe Bernold* and *Juliette Bausor*

BBC MUSIC CONCERTO CHOICE

Virtuosic Vivaldi teamwork

Nicholas Anderson admires Giuliano Carmignola's new partnership



PLAYFUL AND POETIC:
Giuliano Carmignola
shows Vivaldi's full range



VIVALDI

**Concertos for two violins,
RV 505, 507, 513, 527 & 529**

Giuliano Carmignola,
Amandine Beyer (violin); Gli Incogniti
Harmonia Mundi HMC 902249
70:01 mins

Some years ago Giuliano Carmignola joined Viktoria Mullova in a dazzlingly virtuosic disc of six concertos for two violins by Vivaldi. But for this release featuring six more Vivaldi double violin concertos, he's joined by the more naturally inclined French violinist Amandine Beyer. The Italian composer wrote more than 25 double violin concertos with

string accompaniment, and they are especially rewarding both for the high quality of their material and for their frequently advanced virtuosity. While many of the extended passages for the solo protagonists progress in parallel thirds there are other highly

The musicians respond to this wonderful music with passion

original passages of great beauty: for instance, the opening movement of the B flat Concerto, RV 529, where a lyrical melody pursued by one soloist is accompanied by their partner's restless arpeggios.

The musical chemistry between Carmignola and Beyer is intuitive and gratifying. Outer movements sparkle with playful vigour while

centrally placed solo movements are poetically declaimed. Some of Vivaldi's very finest writing for his own instrument, the violin, is found here, especially in the B flat Concerto and the D major RV 513 with its unusual and arresting unaccompanied opening fantasy for the soloists. Soloists and ripieno alike respond to this wonderful music with passion, insight and a feeling for the idiom that emerges as second nature. A Concerto in D minor, RV 127 for ripieno strings provides the icing on a delicious cake.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
RECORDING ★★★★★



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JOHN ADAMS

Scheherazade.2

Leila Josefowicz (violin); St Louis
Symphony/David Robertson
Nonesuch 7559794351 47:35 mins

Equalling the fabulous richness of Rimsky-Korsakov's symphonic suite is a tall order, but John Adams has a twist in mind: the brutal situation of the wife who staves off execution by telling her bloodthirsty husband the tales of 1001 nights still resonates today. So this Muslim woman is at the mercy of zealots and bigots who pursue her until the final, miraculous 'sanctuary': three of Adams's finest minutes as the soloist soars above queasily shifting multipart strings.

The rest is more nebulous, sounding at times like film noir mood music. But the textures, with the extra spice of cimbalom thrown into the mix, are never less than beguiling, and violinist Leila Josefowicz throws herself into a generous role like a serious actor in Shakespeare. As the third in Adams's violin-solo triptych, *Scheherazade.2* doesn't quite have the exhilaration of the first concerto or the trance-magic of *The Dharma at Big Sur*, but even a second-level Adams piece is better than a thousand and one works by most composers working today. *David Nice*

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
RECORDING ★★★★★



CPE BACH

Flute Concertos, Wq 22, 166 & 169

Emmanuel Pahud (flute);
Kammerakademie Potsdam/
Trevor Pinnock (harpsichord)
Warner 0825646276790 66:42 mins
Although his successors thought highly of CPE Bach – Mozart said

'although Emmanuel Bach is the father, we are the children' and Beethoven recommended him as a model to his composition students – he was never so well regarded by Frederick the Great. He joined the Royal Court in 1740 as Chamber Musician, and the three concertos on Emmanuel Pahud's disc were not commissions from the King but simply arrangements of earlier keyboard concertos.

The A minor Concerto Wq166 begins in the stormiest *Sturm und Drang* ('storm and stress') manner, thin string textures in hectically fast tremolos. The lyrical flute entry seems at first to bear out the King's limits as a gifted amateur – in his later years his accompanists had to slow up by Royal command to allow him time to take breath. In 1750 he was clearly in fine fettle as the subsequent episode develops into a series of spectacular scales. The gentle alternation of flute and strings in the slow movement sets off a perky dialogue in the finale which dispels any doubts about the King's technical prowess.

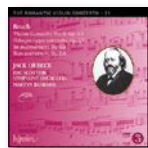
The second work, Wq169 in G major, follows much the same pattern as the first. The third, though, Wq22 in D minor, is a rather more sombre, weighty piece. The major mode middle movement is quite profoundly moving while its focus on developing motifs explains its appeal to Beethoven.

If CPE Bach's two extremes, of unyielding storminess and emotive lyricism, prove ultimately rather predictable, both Pahud and the tautly disciplined Kammerakademie Potsdam strings under Trevor Pinnock provide an excellent account of this new mid-18th century musical language.

George Pratt

PERFORMANCE
RECORDING

★★★★
★★★★★



BRUCH

**Violin Concerto No. 2;
Konzertstück; In Memoriam;
Adagio appassionato**

Jack Liebeck (violin); BBC Scottish
Symphony Orchestra/Martyn Brabbins
Hyperion CDA 68055 68:21 mins

Bruch spent most of his long career in the shadow of his First Violin Concerto's supreme popularity. As a result, a great deal of highly attractive music fell by the wayside.

It wasn't until Itzhak Perlman recorded the Second Concerto (twice) for EMI in the 1970s/'80s, and Salvatore Accardo all of Bruch's violin concertante works for Philips around the same time, that most of us realised what we had been missing.

Jack Liebeck, who has already recorded Bruch's First and Third Violin Concertos for Hyperion, might be said to combine Perlman's musical intensity with Accardo's Italianate tonal purity and liteness. Throughout the Second Concerto, with its unforgettable soaring opening, Liebeck combines a beguiling silvery sound with tantalising interpretative restraint, free of heart-on-the-sleeve rhetoric. Some might prefer a more overtly indulgent cantabile soulfulness, although rarely has Bruch's melodic genius been sounded with such chaste sweetness as here, ideally complimented by Liebeck's captivating narrow-fast vibrato.

Yet it is in the one-movement items that he really comes into his own, weaving compelling emotional narratives out of material that is not always necessarily of the highest distinction. Backed to the hilt by Martyn Brabbins and the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, captured in naturally glowing yet detailed sound, he somehow makes the *Konzertstück* sound like a masterpiece in full bloom.

Julian Haylock

PERFORMANCE
RECORDING

★★★★
★★★★



DUSAPIN

Aufgang†

B MANTOVANI

Jeux d'eau*

RIHM

Gedicht des Malers

Renaud Capuçon (violin); †Orchestre
Philharmonique de Radio France/
Myung-Whun Chung; Vienna
Symphony; *Orchestre de l'Opéra
national de Paris/Philippe Jordan
Erato 2564602687 65:44 mins

These concertos by living composers (Bruno Mantovani, born in 1974, is not to be confused with the light orchestral arranger of the last century) were all first performed by Renaud Capuçon – indeed two of these live recordings come from their premieres. Wolfgang Rihm's *Gedicht des Malers* is the



INTENSE YET PURE:
Jack Liebeck champions
forgotten Bruch

shortest, and takes its cue from the continuing lyrical tendency in German music: there are, tellingly, echoes of Berg's Violin Concerto in some of Rihm's harmonic and melodic twists and turns, beautifully played. On the whole though, it's a more kaleidoscopic piece, where the warm and the fragmented rub shoulders, creating an ongoing tension, which is never quite resolved.

Pascal Dusapin's *Aufgang* is more conventionally in three movements. The quiet opening, where Capuçon soars questioningly and effortlessly above the orchestra, is sometimes disturbed by audience noise, but this is masked as the music becomes louder and more active. Even then, the harmonic progress is stately, with much of the activity revolving around slowly mutating, repeated motifs: the second movement, with its bell-like scales, gave me an unexpected vision of John Tavener's *The Protecting Veil*. And although the finale is more acerbic for much of its length, it does briefly revisit the attenuated sonorities of the very opening, before a decisive end.

The recorded sound in Mantovani's *Jeux d'eau* isn't quite as focused, with orchestra and soloist both a little distant, and the work itself sometimes seems to be marking time with effects – rapid arpeggios, trills, tremolos, harmonics – rather than developing a musical argument. The more exciting music is often in the orchestra, but it's a tribute to Capuçon's skills that, like both of the other works it is completely under his skin. *Martin Cotton*

PERFORMANCE
RECORDING

★★★★
★★★★



ROSS HARRIS

Violin Concerto; Symphony No. 5

Ilya Gringolts (violin), Sally-Anne
Russell (mezzo-soprano); Auckland
Philharmonia Orchestra/Garry Walker,
Eckehard Stier

Naxos 8.573532 65:24 mins

This disc showcases two arresting works by New Zealand-based composer Ross Harris (b1945). Composed in 2010 and teetering between the tonal and atonal, Harris's Violin Concerto No. 1 is striking in its capacity to shift between light and shade. The rhapsodic solo line (performed with grace and fire by Ilya Gringolts) sings almost constantly, twisting and diving across the work's five movements which span the elegaic, the sardonic and the triumphant. The Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra wind section gives an immaculate performance of Harris's delicate, quasi-extemporised chamber textures.

Harris's Violin Concerto is paired with the composer's Fifth Symphony: premiered in 2014, it is a deftly-constructed exploration of the agonies of war. The work is underpinned by settings of three stark, moving poems by contemporary Hungarian poet Panni Palásti, recalling the violent siege of Budapest in 1944. Framed by two austere but fiercely beautiful *adagio* movements and a spiky pair of scherzos, the three sung movements are themselves mystical and restrained, with Sally-Anne Russell's

REISSUES

Reviewed by Julian Haylock

BEETHOVEN • BRUCH

Beethoven: Violin Concerto;
Bruch: Violin Concerto No. 1
Salvatore Accardo (violin); Leipzig
Gewandhaus Orchestra/Kurt Masur
Pentatone PTC 5186 237 (1966/69)
71:22 mins



Salvatore Accardo may lack the volcanic intensity of Isaac Stern in the Bruch and Wolfgang

Schneiderhan's divine spirituality in the Beethoven, yet he produces a ravishing sound of captivating tonal finesse.

PERFORMANCE ★★★
RECORDING ★★★★★

BRAHMS

Violin Concerto; Double Concerto
Salvatore Accardo (violin), Heinrich
Schiff (cello); Leipzig Gewandhaus
Orchestra/Kurt Masur
Eloquence 482 5085 (1979) 78:26 mins



Although beautifully played and immaculately paced, Accardo sounds less engaged by the

solo concerto than the double, in which he is partnered by an inspired Heinrich Schiff on peak form.

PERFORMANCE ★★★
RECORDING ★★★★★

HENZE • MOZART

Mozart: Violin Concerto No. 5; Henze:
Violin Concerto; Martin: Magnificat
Wolfgang Schneiderhan (violin);
Swiss Festival Orchestra/Paul
Hindemith; Ferdinand Leitner
Audite 95.644 (1952-68) 65:07 mins



Live performances from the 1950s and '60s that mark out Schneiderhan as a first-rate

Mozartian and a valued champion of contemporary music in a fizzing account of the Henze Concerto.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
RECORDING ★★★

MENDELSSOHN

Violin Concertos in E minor & D minor
Salvatore Accardo (violin); London
Philharmonic Orchestra/Charles Dutoit
Eloquence 482 5073 (1976) 55:46 mins



Accardo's silken tonal purity and sovereign command matches the composer's magical soundworld to a tee, especially in the sparkling, post-Mozartian gestures of the early D minor Concerto.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
RECORDING ★★★★★

rich mezzo-soprano lending them a ghostly power.

General recording levels feel a touch muted to do full justice to Harris's complex musical textures, but the performances are excellent and the disc offers listeners a welcome encounter with this fine composer's work. *Kate Wakeling*

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
RECORDING ★★★



MAIER

Violin Concerto in D minor;
Piano Quartet in E minor;
Swedish Tunes and Dances

Gregory Maytan (violin), Bernt Lysell
(viola), Sara Wijk (cello), Ann-Sofi
Klingberg (piano); Helsingborg
Symphony Orchestra/Andreas Stoeher
dB Productions dBCD 174 63:55 mins

Although today little more than a footnote in the history of late Romantic music, Amanda Maier (1853-94) was a profoundly gifted musician whose early death (probably from tuberculosis) robbed the world of a burgeoning creative talent. Born in Sweden and starting out as a violinist-composer, she stopped performing publicly following her marriage to composer Julius Röntgen in 1880.

They were by all accounts a devoted couple, collaborating on a number of opuses, including the *Swedish Tunes and Dances*, a set of six enchanting salon pieces for violin and piano shaded by the stylistic imprimaturs of their close friends, Brahms, Joachim and Grieg. Violinist Gregory Maytan and pianist Ann-Sofi Klingberg take the music's considerable difficulties in their stride, creating the uncanny impression of domestic music-making, while radiating a warm glow of musical contentment.

The one-movement Violin Concerto is an earlier work, dating from 1875 when Maier was a student in Leipzig. Such was the impact of her playing at its premiere in Halle that she was invited to undertake a series of extensive tours. Synthesising Schumannesque fantasy with the virtuoso flair of Saint-Saëns, it is melodically enchanting and melliflously orchestrated.

The Brahmsian E minor Piano Quartet, Maier's final major work, dates from 1891 and was much admired by Grieg. Heartbroken at his wife's death, Röntgen poignantly inscribed the score 'Not all of me will die.' The high quality of Maier's inspiration is matched by the

seemingly effortless poise of these sensitive, devoted performances, captured in commendably well-balanced sound. *Julian Haylock*

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
RECORDING ★★★★★



MOZART

Flute Concerto No. 1; Flute and Harp
Concerto in C; Andante in C

Philippe Bernold (flute, conductor),
Emmanuel Ceysson (harp); Orchestre de
Chambre de Paris
Aparté AP 115 55:41 mins

The flute is a regular fixture in Mozart's oeuvre. From lilting melodies to scurrying staccato passages, Wolfgang knew how to get the best from the instrument. Yet the composer is said to have claimed that he could not bear the flute. French flautist Philippe Bernold asserts this is nonsense – 'of course Mozart loved the flute!' – suggesting in his liner notes that grammatical confusion could be to blame.

It's a sensible assertion, and one that's heartily endorsed by this collection of Mozart's key works for flute. Bernold is an impressive Mozartian; his sound is as full-bodied as a Pinot Noir, with a deep and resonate tone in the lower octaves and an enviable capability for the long phrasing that marks out an exceptional woodwind player. Harpist Emmanuel Ceysson is a sympathetic collaborator and the concerto for both instruments is one of the finest on record. Their *Andantino* is particularly gorgeous. Bernold wears his heart on his sleeve in the *Andante* in C; the solo flute part is sweet, but never saccharine. The ensemble playing is generally crisp throughout. *Claire Jackson*

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
RECORDING ★★★



MOZART • NIELSEN

Mozart: Flute Concerto No. 1 in G;
Andante in C; Rondo in D;
Nielsen: Flute Concerto

Juliette Bausor (flute);
Royal Northern Sinfonia/Jaime Martin
Signum SIGCD 467 55:35 mins

Like Philippe Bernold on his new recording (review above), Juliette

Bausor pairs Mozart's First Flute Concerto with the Andante in C, adding the Rondo (K373) for afters. Bausor – principal flute in the London Philharmonic Orchestra and London Mozart Players, and member of Ensemble 360 – is more expansive than Bernold; she takes almost half a minute more than her French counterpart in the first movement of the concerto, and another 15 seconds in the third. Conversely, Bausor's *Adagio* movement, is significantly faster than the Aparté recording. Bausor's sound is equally glorious, but Bernold's fleet-fingered approach is more effective in the faster sections. This also applies to the Andante in C; Bausor adds nearly an extra minute on to Bernold's time. Music is not simply about speed, of course, but the clear difference in pacing is worth due consideration. Elsewhere, Bausor's Romantic spin on Mozart's more wistful sections works well, as demonstrated in the Andante in C.

Nielsen's Flute Concerto is one of the most exciting and experimental 20th-century concertante works for that instrument, and Bausor's command of rubato serves her well here. The Royal Northern Sinfonia, conducted by Jaime Martin, gives a thrilling performance; the *Allegro moderato* contains all the necessary foreboding and turbulence. Bausor's cadenzas are spectacular: plaintive, jagged and, finally, tranquil. The second (and final) movement is poignant, beautiful and transformative – worth exploring.

Claire Jackson
PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
RECORDING ★★★★★



VIVALDI

Flautino Concerto in C, RV443;
Recorder Concerto in C minor,
RV441; Nisi Dominus (Psalm
126), RV608 – Cum dederit (arr.
recorder); Flute Concerto, Op. 10
No. 1 in F, RV 433 (La tempesta di
mare); Concerto for two Mandolins
in G, RV 532 – Andante; Flute
Concerto, Op. 10 No. 2 in G minor,
RV 439 (La notte); Giustino – Vedro
con mio diletto (arr. recorder);
The Four Seasons: Spring – Allegro
(arr. Rousseau)

Lucie Horsch (recorder);
Amsterdam Vivaldi Players
Decca 483 0896 53:25 mins

The charmingly naive picture in the back of the booklet liner notes

of 17-year-old Horsch gazing at her recorder, as if to recall a forgotten fingering, belies her fearsome virtuosity and superb technique. It's a reminder, too, that Vivaldi wrote much of this music for girls of around Horsch's age at the Venetian orphanage, the Ospedale Della Pietà, where he taught for much of his life.

RV 443 immediately displays capacious lungs and white-knuckle fingering, though, as often with soprano recorder, pitch occasionally flags in sustained quiet moments. The dark, still opening of 'Cum dederit' from *Nisi Dominus*, tenor recorder 'singing' the text, is profoundly evocative, as is Jean-Jaques Rousseau's transcription of 'Spring' from *The Seasons*, for recorder alone. Horsch's cellist father joins her in an imaginative arrangement of the *Andante* of RV532 for two mandolins.

Less successful is an aria transcription from *Giustino*: devoid of text and dramatic setting, it is here simply a barely striking melody accompanied by the quartet of strings and continuo.

Two of Vivaldi's most potentially terrifying descriptive programmatic concertos are treated rather blandly compared with more vivid recordings. But this is a disc to buy, and display in years to come as the start of a distinguished career.

George Pratt

PERFORMANCE

★★★★

RECORDING

★★★★

BACKGROUND TO...



Amanda Maier
(1853-94)

Maier received her first instruction in violin and piano from

her father, and followed his footsteps aged 16 by entering the Royal Conservatory in Stockholm. She received the highest marks in her subjects – including violin, piano, organ and composition – and became the first woman in Sweden to take the conducting exam. She became friends with Grieg, and the German-Dutch pianist and composer Julius Röntgen, whom she eventually married, whereupon her career as a musician ended.



FANTASIES, RHAPSODIES & DAYDREAMS

Massenet: Meditation from Thaïs;

Ravel: Tzigane; Saint-Saëns:

Havanaise; Introduction and

Rondo capriccioso; Sarasate:

Ziguenerweisen; Vaughan

Williams: The Lark Ascending;

Waxman: Carmen Fantasy

Arabella Steinbacher (violin);

Orchestre Philharmonique de Monte-

Carlo/Lawrence Foster

PentaTone PTC 5186 536 (hybrid CD/SACD)

73:37 mins

Recorded in glowing sound that feels astonishingly lifelike, especially in SACD surround, this recital is something of a triumph for violinist Arabella Steinbacher. Waxman's

Fantasy on themes from Bizet's

Carmen (composed originally for Jascha Heifetz) is finger-crippingly difficult, and it can also sound thoroughly unsexy in the wrong hands. By indulging the more lyrical passages with lashings of golden tone, Steinbacher makes it sound like a near-masterpiece.

As if to make amends for not playing Sarasate's popular take on *Carmen*, Steinbacher follows on with a performance of that composer's *Zigeunerweisen* that smoulders throughout the long opening section. She even finds time for some sleight-of-hand *sul ponticello* when the notes start flying.

In an ideal world, Vaughan Williams's *The Lark Ascending* would be played with a faster, narrower vibrato than Steinbacher's to sound at its most radiant; yet so eloquently natural are her musical responses that this feels like carping in this context.

Saint-Saëns's two old warhorses likewise sound resplendent, the *Introduction and Rondo capriccioso* particularly so, with its pedal-pointed double-stopping and heart-warming cadencing into F major. Even Massenet's *Méditation* emerges sounding freshly minted, so achingly supple is Steinbacher's phrasing.

Saving perhaps the best till last, Ravel's *Tzigane*, whose opening extended cadenza simmers seductively in a twilight world ravishingly free of bar-lines and pyrotechnical display. *Julian Haylock*

PERFORMANCE

★★★★

RECORDING

★★★★



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OPERA

Joyce DiDonato and Olga Kulchynska are superb as Bellini's star-crossed lovers; plus *Christiane Karg* shines in *Alan Curtis's* final Handel sessions

BBC MUSIC OPERA CHOICE

A *Walküre* of soaring passion

This budget version is a feisty challenger, says *Michael Scott Rohan*



WAGNER

Die Walküre

Matthias Goerne, Michelle DeYoung, Stuart Skelton, Heidi Melton, Petra Lang, Falk Struckmann; Hong Kong Philharmonic Orch/Jaap van Zweden
Naxos 8.660394-97 236:32 mins (4 discs)
Naxos's recent *Rheingold* featured exceptional cast and recording. I was less impressed with Jaap van Zweden's conducting, a decent first stab but lacking detail, and Matthias Goerne's surprisingly stolid Wotan. Not so this *Walküre*.

Like many conductors, Van Zweden seems to respond more naturally to this richer, more passionate score, better suited to his sweeping approach. Drawing airy, luminescent textures from the Hong

Jaap van Zweden draws airy, luminescent sounds from his players

Kong players, he drives the drama excitingly – missing telling nuances, still, but avoiding Pierre Boulez's glibness and the lumpen Teutonicism currently reigning at Bayreuth.

His singers respond superbly, although they're rather close-miked; Matthias Goerne consistently seems to be singing right in your face, but he brings Wotan's fearful conflicts of love and desperation alive with a beautifully mellow bass tone rare in the role these days. As in Marek Janowski's Pentatone cycle, Petra Lang isn't the most natural Brünnhilde, but her high notes soar



A FINE BRÜNNHILDE:
Petra Lang hits the high notes in her portrayal

with cutting power; unusually for an ex-mezzo, it's her lower range which can curdle slightly. It's a fine, moving performance nevertheless. Skelton and Melton are well established Volsungs, but both their voices seem to have taken on fresh lustre and clarion ring, giving memorably intense performances. The top-drawer Valkyries include British Brünnhildes Katherine Broderick and Elaine McKrill, Hunding is gruff veteran Wotan Falk Struckmann, and Michelle de Young an imposing Fricka.

Among bargain recordings this is outstanding, an ideal starting point for newcomers, and it's competitive even among full-price versions. The Blu-ray (it's cheaper!) should sound superb, outclassed only by Solti's complete cycle. *Siegfried*, please?

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
RECORDING ★★★★★



ON THE WEBSITE

Hear extracts from this recording and the rest of this month's choices on the **BBC Music Magazine website**
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BELLINI

DVD | *Capuleti e i Montecchi*

Joyce DiDonato, Olga Kulchynska, Benjamin Bernheim, Roberto Lorenzi et al; Zurich Opera Choir; Zurich Philharmonia/Fabio Luisi; dir. Christof Loy (Zurich, 2015)

Accentus Music ACC 20353 139 mins

Christof Loy's Zurich staging of Bellini's *Romeo and Juliet* opera pays the work the compliment of taking it seriously. In a central work of the *bel canto* canon, it is crucial that vocal values are scrupulously maintained – and here they certainly are, with an even and technically excellent cast, who understand the need for librettist Felice Romani's text to be given its due as so expressively set by Bellini. Fabio Luisi's conducting, too, is dynamic and dramatically conceived.

Designer Christian Schmidt's visualisation suggests the conflict of two sharp-suited Mafia families in the 1950s, and uses a revolve to show us a long back-history of internecine strife that effectively continues throughout the opera. Here, we are conscious of the context for the extraordinary thing that happens between the two principals, and how the previous generation's inability to let go of their age-old feud ultimately destroys them.

Joyce DiDonato returns to the role of Romeo, having already filmed it in the much less satisfactory 2012 San Francisco staging by Vincent Boussard. One or two high notes escape her, but generally her disciplined and imaginative singing, fine declamation and focused acting help convince us she's a somewhat geeky male teenager in love. Soprano Olga Kulchynska, new to the international scene when she jumped into the role of Giulietta, proves a worthy match for her more experienced partner.

No one else gets much of a look-in in this opera, though Benjamin Bernheim makes more of Tebaldo than usual, and proves surprisingly sympathetic, while Roberto Lorenzi's Lorenzo (a doctor rather than Shakespeare's priest) and Alexei Botnariuc's Capellio are both impressively achieved. Loy adds a silent, androgynous companion for Romeo, enigmatically played by Georgij Puchalski, but he certainly does no harm. *George Hall*

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
PICTURE & SOUND ★★★★★



BELLINI

DVD Norma

Gregory Kunde, Raymond Aceto, Sonda Radvanovsky, Ekaterina Gubanova, Ana Puche, Francisco Vas; Gran Teatre del Liceu Choir & Symphony Orchestra/Renato Palumbo; dir. Kevin Newbury (Barcelona, 2015)
C Major DVD: 737208;
Blu-ray: 737304 176 mins

Should anyone believe that the age of park-and-bark is over, they should take a look at Kevin Newbury's production of *Norma*. It is hard to believe that this is the work of the director who animated Antonio Cagnoni's dizzy *bel canto* farce of small town amateur theatrics, *Don Bucefalo*, relocating it to the American Midwest in the 1980s. Here the setting and period are uncertain: an abstract wood of leafless silver birch extends from a vast armory inhabited by druid priestesses with complex hairpieces and sci-fi ball gowns.

Where Cagnoni's cast of comic archetypes were vividly individuated, Bellini's Gauls and Romans blur into a gloomy mass of tulle, pleather and dreadlocks. Newbury's staging drains Bellini's lyric tragedy of its volatile emotional energy and essential intimacy. Spectacle, a small but vital element of the drama, and one well served by designer David Korins's Act II reveal in 'Guerra! Guerra!', is handicapped by Jean-Pierre Loisl's video direction.

As *Norma*, Sonda Radvanovsky favours Joan Crawford-style histrionics. As conductor Renato Palumbo adjusts the tempo for every embellishment, 'Casta diva' starts slowly and grinds almost to a halt. It's a performance of gritty authority and impressively spun *messa di voce* but gamey tone and sour intonation. Gregory Kunde's Pollione is similarly unyielding. All the details are there but the effort in making them is audible. Ekaterina Gubanova's dark-toned Adalgisa is more agile, holding true to pitch and style, even in duet with Radvanovsky. Raymond Aceto (Oroveso), Ana Puche (Clotilde) and Francisco Vas (Flavio) deliver solid support, as do the chorus and orchestra of Gran Teatre del Liceu, but Bellini's compact, psychological masterpiece sags and drifts where it should grip. *Anna Picard*

PERFORMANCE ★★
PICTURE & SOUND ★★



FASHIONABLY FUTURISTIC:
 Helga Davis and Kate Moran in
 Glass's *Einstein on the Beach*



CHISHOLM

Simoon

Jane Irwin, Philip Sheffield, Damian Thantrey, Charlie Drummond; Music Co-OPERative/Ian Ryan
 Delphian DCD34139 48:36 mins

Erik Chisholm's mildly modernist idiom meant that his music never gained much traction in his native Scotland, before his emigration to South Africa in 1946. There he headed Cape Town University's music department, including its opera school, which meant that his own works had a decent chance of getting performed. *Simoon* never was, except in a piano version; and this concert performance, recorded live in Glasgow in 2015, was the opera's true world premiere.

The plot, based on a Strindberg play, is set in colonial Algeria, where the hot simoon desert wind notoriously deranges the occupying French troops. One of them, Guimard, strays into the home of local girl Biskra, who sets out to avenge the troops' murder of a local guide by further unhinging Guimard's mind with her personal brand of black-arts psychology; eventually, when she shows him a skull, Guimard imagines that this is his dead self, and indeed does die.

Chisholm's Berg-and-Bartók-influenced idiom, strikingly coloured by the exotic scales encountered during his wartime work in India, depicts the story with virtuosos pace and inventiveness. The swirling chromaticism depicting the simoon wind, while an obvious device, is

brilliantly handled nonetheless; and the intervening episodes offer a remarkable range of incident and colour, with a harmonium supplying a strange continuum of otherworldly sound.

Apart from a few minor live-performance smudges, the playing, singing and conducting are all excellent; Jane Irwin rises impressively to the challenge of the wide soprano-to-mezzo range of Biskra's part, with Damian Thantrey's Guimard equally secure and accurate. *Malcolm Hayes*
PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
RECORDING ★★★★★



EÖTVÖS

Paradise Reloaded (Lilith)

Annette Schonmuller, Holger Falk, Eric Stoklossa, Rebecca Nelsen, Gernot Henrich, Andreas Jankowitsch, Michael Wagner, Avelyne Francis, Christina Sidak, Anna Clare Hauf; Hungarian Radio Symphonic Orchestra/Gregory Vajda
 Budapest Music Center BMC 226
 94:08 mins (2 discs)

It was never Peter Eötvös's plan to write operas. After working briefly as a composer for theatre and film as a student in the 1950s, Eötvös emerged as a staunch modernist, focusing solely on electronic music and working closely with Stockhausen and Boulez. Yet a chance misunderstanding in 1986 (an invitation to stage Eötvös's purely orchestral work *Chinese Opera*) saw the composer embark on *Three Sisters* which, when it finally premiered in 1997, proved a runaway success.

Completed in 2013, *Paradise Reloaded (Lilith)* is a dramatic,

ambitious and astonishing work which explores the intriguing character in medieval Jewish tradition of Lilith, Adam's first wife. After being banished from paradise, Lilith makes a pact with Lucifer to win back Adam and destroy Eve. The four iconic figures are joined by a three-voice male chorus and corresponding female chorus in a taut drama of loss, desire and power-play.

Eötvös's magnificent score is by turns explosive and luminescent, ranging from fierce dissonance to otherworldly enchantment – the haunting passages scored for the female chorus are particularly arresting. This recording with the Hungarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, conducted by the excellent Gregory Vajda, is committed and precise. Soloist performances are strong all round, with Rebecca Nelsen's highly-charged, pin-bright rendering of Eve particularly noteworthy. The double-CD edition is slickly presented, although an English translation of the German libretto would have been welcome. *Kate Wakeling*

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
RECORDING ★★★★★



GLASS

DVD Einstein on the Beach

Christopher Knowles, Samuel M Johnson, Lucinda Childs, Antoine Silverman, Helga Davis, Kate Moran; Lucinda Childs Dance Company; Philip Glass Ensemble/Michael Riesman; dir. Robert Wilson (Paris, 2014)
 Opus Arte OA 1178D 264 mins (2 discs)

Pleasing, mesmerising, irritating... While devoid of explicit emotional expression, Philip Glass's *Einstein on the Beach* provokes many responses over its four-and-a-half-hour duration. Still fresh and fashionably futuristic, it parades with conviction the minimalist techniques that Glass had arrived at in 1975 through his involvement with the avant-garde downtown scene in Manhattan. As such, this immaculately realised revival, filmed in Paris in 2014 and lavishly packaged, is a living monument to a work that marked the arrival on the world stage of a soon-to-be stratospherically successful composer.

Directed by co-creator Robert Wilson and featuring choreography by Lucinda Childs, the nine

REISSUES

Reviewed by *Malcolm Hayes*

GRANADOS

Maria del Carmen

Soloists; Wexford Festival Opera Chorus; National Philharmonic Orchestra of Belarus/Bragado-Darman
Naxos 8.660144-45 (2004)
143:21 mins (2 discs)



A poetic prelude introduces an opera of slender substance and monotonous pacing, despite

passages of genuine charm. Decent singing and playing, apart from Diana Veronese's wobbly Maria.

PERFORMANCE

★★★★

RECORDING

★★★★

KRENEK

Orpheus und Eurydike

Hamilton, Vejzovic, Lindsley, ORF Chorus & SO Wien/Steinberg
Orfeo C 923 1621 (1990)
105:30 mins (2 discs)



The super-fluent mild modernism of Krenek's 1926 opera holds up well in this Salzburg

Festival concert performance, with exceptional singing from Dunja Vejzović and Celina Lindsley.

PERFORMANCE

★★★★

RECORDING

★★★★

ORFF

Die Kluge

Falewicz, Büchner, Lorenz, Stryczek, Leipzig Radio SO/Kegel
Berlin Classics 0300748BC (1976-80)
83:29 mins (2 discs)



You'll find this 1942 stage work (part music hall, part fairytale) either wacky

entertainment, or a trashy nadir of German musical culture. Excellent performances.

PERFORMANCE

★★★★

RECORDING

★★★★

ZURAB ANJAPARIDZE

Arias and Scenes by Puccini, Verdi, Leoncavallo, Donizetti, Tchaikovsky
Anjaparidze (tenor); Bolshoi Theatre Choir & Orchestra/Ermler, Khaikin
Melodiya MEL CD 10 02373 (1967-73)
68:24 mins



Tonally and technically magnificent singing (with the odd hairy-chested moment)

from this Georgian tenor, whose Hermann in *Queen of Spades* is probably unsurpassed. Beautifully sensitive conducting by Ermler.

PERFORMANCE

★★★★

RECORDING

★★★

connected 20-minute scenes, in four acts separated by 'Knee Plays' (or entr'actes) are stylishly and authentically realised. Its four principal vocalists – Kate Moran is vocally and visually particularly arresting – and choir cope admirably with the fiendish demands of Glass's now trademark repetitions of solfège, syllables, numbers and short sections of poetry. Dressed in predominantly crisp whites and greys, they perform against Wilson's beautifully lit backdrop of steel blues.

But what does it all mean? Its three main scenes – Train, Trial and Field/Spaceship – and violinist (Antoine Silverman), who resembles the scientist, nod to Einstein's theory of relativity and his unified field theory; but beyond that it's hard to say, as Glass's ritualistic *Gesamtkunstwerk* eschews traditional narrative. The Philip Glass Ensemble's playing is vibrant, and the dancers' robotic, angular movements are captured by film-maker Don Kent in high-definition detail – the overall effect is simultaneously alienating and immersive. In a digital world in which we all slave to the algorithm, his opera's visions of human subservience to numbers seems chillingly prescient. *Nick Shave*

PERFORMANCE

★★★★

PICTURE & SOUND

★★★★★



HANDEL

Mitologia: arias, duets and overtures from Il Parnasso in festa, Semele, Hercules, Apollo e Dafne, Atalanta, Partenope, and Ecceggiate, festeggiate!

Christiane Karg (soprano), Romina Basso (contralto); Il Complesso Barocco/
Alan Curtis
Deutsche Harmonia Mundi 88875199812
70 mins

On 15 July 2015, the legendary Handel interpreter Alan Curtis died. Curtis didn't just revive forgotten works by Handel, he gave us ears to hear them. This disc testifies to his extraordinary legacy, and to the genius he shared with Handel to make music tell stories.

The disc's programme is contrived to show the psychological depth Handel gave to mythical characters. This can happen only if the musicians grasp the effects that Handel was after; Curtis divines Handel's intentions, and adds his own. For what turned out to be his last recording session, Curtis chose scenes

of intense experience, from the tender mutual love of Atalanta and Meleagro to Orfeo's despair at the death of Eurydice. Led by Curtis at the keyboard, soprano Christiane Karg and contralto Romina Basso draw inner character out of Handel's score. Singing Orfeo's aria, Karg floats a motionless straight tone – a vocal production unusual for her – over the band's stumbling dotted rhythms, as sorrow alters Orfeo's experience of time. As the sex kitten Semele, Karg is the essence of coquetry, wilfully refusing to follow the band. In the mad scene of Hercules' wife Dejanara, Basso's fioratura and the band's heft explode the confines of the normal.

My one regret is that Basso's English pronunciation is occasionally laboured. Such moments scarcely impact, however, on this incandescent last recording of a sorely-missed artist. *Berta Joncus*

PERFORMANCE

★★★★

RECORDING

★★★★★



ROSSINI

Arias from Demetrio e Polibio, Matilde di Shabran, Adelaide di Borgogna, Tancredi, Semiramide, Eduardo e Cristina

Franco Fagioli (countertenor); Armonia Atenea Choir; Armonia Atenea/
George Petrou
DG 479 5681 75:23 mins

The Argentinean countertenor springs from a local tradition where his voice type and the Baroque repertory associated with it have up until now been rare; the liner note to this all-Rossini release claims for him more of a *bel canto* background. In any case, it's not the surprisingly small amount of music that Rossini wrote for the castrato voice that he focuses on here, but the mezzo-soprano roles in the composer's serious operas that were originally sung by female singers impersonating young men.

In theory, this might have worked well, but there are limitations to Franco Fagioli's vocalism that make the result disappointing. Words are rarely clear, and the singer's dynamic range is relatively small. He pretty well entirely sticks around the *mezzo forte* mark, so that the dynamic variety that a Marilyn Horne or a Cecilia Bartoli, for instance, might bring to these pieces is largely absent, let alone their sense of dramatic engagement. Skilful and often technically accomplished though much of his work is, it's rarely moving.

George Petrou's period-instrument orchestra is generally willing and able, but the horn obbligato in one of the *Matilde di Shabran* extracts repeatedly defeats the player, while the choir is not much more than rough and ready. *George Hall*

PERFORMANCE

★★

RECORDING

★★★★



VÁSQUEZ, SIERRA, LIANG AND PAREDES

Cuatro Corridos

Susan Narucki (soprano), Pablo Gomez (guitar), Aleck Karis (piano), Ayano Kataoka (percussion)

Bridge BRIDGE 9473 53:24 mins

The Mexico-US border is the most frequently crossed international boundary in the world, with hundreds of millions of legal crossings a year. Mexican novelist Jorge Volpi became interested in the stories of those who cross this border illegally – in particular the horrific experiences of the women from Tenancingo, Tlaxcala who were for years forced, often by their own families, into prostitution in the strawberry fields of California.

Soprano Susan Narucki, also the moving soloist here, commissioned an opera libretto by Volpi on the subject. Its four scenes, each essentially a monologue, feature viewpoints of four women, each by a different composer – two Mexican, two American. In this committed performance, it's strikingly effective; even better, I imagine, heard and seen live. Scored for soprano, guitar, percussion and piano, the stark soundworld is a good match for the bleak subject matter. Hebert Vázquez draws on the Mexican *corrido* – a ballad-type song or poem – with piano and guitar jostling in aptly unsettling fashion while the narrator, Acuzena, sings of women 'bought and sold to appease men's hunger and lust'. Arlene Sierra gives us the sounds of horses and a panicked heartbeat in her portrait of the guilt-ridden trafficker Dalia. Lei Liang's 'Rose' is the only scene in English, a slow drumbeat underscoring a police statement whose facts are devastatingly powerful. Hilda Paredes's 'La Tierra del Miel' is the longest of the quartet, in which Violeta recounts the tragic fate of the murdered Iris. This isn't an easy listen or easy subject matter, but then what excuse do we have to look away? *Rebecca Franks*

PERFORMANCE

★★★★

RECORDING

★★★★

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CHORAL & SONG

Countertenor *Iestyn Davies* gives a poised and rich-toned account of Bach's cantata 'Vergnügte Ruh, beliebte Seelenlust'; the *Sistine Chapel Choir* sings some rare 'authentic' Palestrina; plus *Roderick Williams* and *Martyn Brabbins* are a winning team in Vaughan Williams's *Nocturnes*

BBC MUSIC CHORAL & SONG CHOICE

Messiah with bells on

George Pratt enjoys a well-loved work in festively reorchestrated guise



HANDEL

Messiah (arr. Andrew Davis)

Erin Wall (soprano), Elizabeth DeShong (mezzo), Andrew Staples (tenor), John Relyea (bass-baritone); Toronto Mendelssohn Choir; Toronto Symphony Orchestra/Sir Andrew Davis
Chandos CHSA 5176 (2) (hybrid CD/SACD)
114:25 mins (2 discs)

The search for authenticity in performing *Messiah* is so firmly established that it seems quite perverse to regress to what the composer certainly didn't intend. Yet numerous examples exist, following two principles – retaining but re-orchestrating Handel's original harmonies and, secondly, elaborating and enriching them. Mozart chose

Davis's percussion includes marimba and sleigh bells

the latter – the chromatic clarinets displaying 'a great light' in 'The people that walked in darkness' is truly unforgettable.

Andrew Davis adopts the expansive model: almost 150 voices and orchestral forces of 55 strings, wind from piccolo to contrabassoon, and a huge battery of percussion including such exotica as marimba and sleigh bells.

He calls on some wonderfully imaginative orchestral techniques: 'All we like sheep' accompanied by pizzicato strings (and phrasing of the words exaggerated to make clear that this isn't expressing



MASTER OF CEREMONIES:
Andrew Davis conducts his lively reworking of Handel

a preference for Sunday lunch). Such a mass of voices is astonishingly well controlled. There are no concessions of tempo in the lightness and delicacy of 'And he shall purify', while 'And the glory of the Lord' reflects the *giocoso* marking with which Davis characterises it.

The solo voices are rich and weighty, sometimes overly so – the bass-baritone 'shake(s) the heav'ns and the earth' with more dramatic ferocity than accuracy. But flute provides a charming *obbligato* to 'How beautiful are the feet',

while the tenor's 'Thy rebuke...' is intensely moving.

Jennens's narrative from Old Testament prophesy to Resurrection is cut from well over two hours to barely over 110 minutes but much of what remains demonstrates a remarkable choral achievement.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
RECORDING ★★★★★



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JS BACH

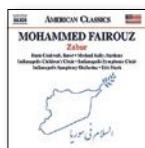
Cantatas BWV 54, 82 & 170;

Cantata BWV 52 & 174 – Sinfonia

Iestyn Davies (countertenor);
Arcangelo/Jonathan Cohen
Hyperion CDA 68111 64:51 mins

How consoling are Bach's solo cantatas? Melodies curve over softly dancing bass lines, or are cradled in verdant counterpoint, yet the imagery in *Vergnügte Ruh*, *beliebte Seelenlust* (BWV 170) is of visceral disgust. The laughing figures and extended trill that spring out from the ruminative chromatic exercise of the cantata's second aria, 'Wie jammern mich', are not those of the poor Christian soul who seeks a godly path but those of 'perverted hearts' who engage in 'Satanic scheming'. Even the cheerful resolve of the final aria, with its zippy little twiddles for *obbligato* chamber organ, is powered by revulsion for earthly frippery.

There's a curious tension here, though it is somewhat smoothed over in Iestyn Davies's poised, sober performance. The Satanic glee of BWV 170 is delivered without histrionics, the tone rich and even. Directed by Jonathan Cohen, Arcangelo's strings have a beautifully firm sound, with plenty of bow and intelligent details from the lute, while oboist Katharina Spreckelsen plays elegantly in this and in the more introspective anguish of *Ich habe genug* (BWV 82). The flinty figures of *Widerstehe doch der Sünde* (BWV 54) are less aggressive than those favoured by Lars Ulrik Mortensen but more sharp-edged than those of Ton Koopman, and Arcangelo's cellos and bass are engaged and expressive throughout. If Davies again seems more focused on beauty and pathos than drama, the Sinfonias from BWV 52 and BWV 174 are pleasingly earthy, with rustic horns. *Anna Picard*
PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
RECORDING ★★★★★



FAIROUZ

Zabur

Dann Coakwell (tenor), Michael Kelly (baritone); Indianapolis Children's Choir; Indianapolis Symphonic Choir; Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra/ Eric Stark
Naxos 8.559803 55:43 mins

Somewhere in the contemporary Middle East a young writer (Dawoūd) is marooned in a shelter with a group of his fellow citizens, as their city is bombed to pieces around them. In an attempt to make sense of the experience Dawoūd, a resurrected version of the Old Testament psalmist David, shares his songs of 'sorrow, praise and wonder' with the people in the shelter, as they await annihilation.

That is the basic scenario of *Zabur*, a new oratorio by the young Arab-American composer Mohammed Fairouz. It is, he says, 'a sort of war requiem' documenting 'how war touches all human beings and, most notably, the children.' The panic-stricken opening chorus reflects this, its tinny shards of orchestration rattling like shrapnel around the singers. Much of the music is, though, slower-moving and contemplative, in places stylistically recalling Philip Glass's *Akhmaten* or *Satyagraha*, especially when the choirs recite a psalm in Arabic. The



WORDY WINNERS: La Compagnia del Madrigale triumphs in Gesualdo

two solo parts, of Dawoūd and his companion Jibreel, are fairly large, and sung with evident commitment by Dann Coakwell and Michael Kelly. The choral contributions are well prepared, and particularly effective at *Zabur*'s touching conclusion.

The work's putative message – that somehow art is capable of transcending the ravages wreaked by warfare and destruction – is debatable. This worthy live recording effectively provides the raw material for that debate to happen. *Terry Blain*

PERFORMANCE ★★★
RECORDING ★★★★★



FAURÉ

Requiem; Messe Basse; Cantique de Jean Racine; Offertories, Op. 65

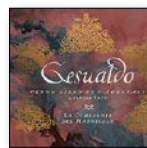
Saint Thomas Choir of Men and Boys, Fifth Avenue, New York; Orchestra of St Luke's/John Scott; Frederick Teardo, Kevin Kwan (organ)
Resonus RES 10174 58:14 mins

St Thomas's Church, New York is the only Episcopalian church in the US to have its own choir school, so it's understandable that the standard of the boys' singing as shown here is extremely high: radiant tone, good words and intelligent phrasing. Richard Pittsinger's first class delivery of the 'Pie Jesu' sets the spine tingling. Only on the extended choral top F at the end of the *Ave verum* is there even the ghost of a wobble, and the blend of the whole choir is also excellent.

Against these virtues one has, sadly, to set a number of less happy

features. The most persistent of these is a tendency to over-sedate tempos, notably in the *Cantique de Jean Racine* and at the start of the *Agnus Dei* where, as is becoming increasingly common, *Andante* is interpreted as *Poco adagio*: the return of this D major opening after the words 'luceat eis' should sound like the voice of hope, not of resignation. In bars three and six of the Introit sedateness takes on another aspect in the enormous *rallentandos* – again, a reading that seems to be doing the rounds and for which there is absolutely no authority in any of the sources. Added to these are a somewhat distant recording of the full choir, and a baritone who commits what the French unkindly call 'chevrotement' – goatly bleating – together with vulgar upward slides, not to mention the illiterate 'promissisti et semini (breath) ejus.' *Roger Nichols*

PERFORMANCE ★★★
RECORDING ★★★



GESUALDO

Terzo Libro di Madrigali, plus works by Stella, Luzzaschi and Fontanelli.

La Compagnia del Madrigale
Glossa GCD 922806 63:31 mins

Gesualdo's third book of madrigals for five voices was published in 1595, some five years after he famously murdered his adulterous wife and her lover. Even so, we do not yet find the extreme chromaticism that adds a certain exoticism to his late works, and the rather short texts here, with few words per line, create problems

for those who wish to give fluid performances. These are works of localised rhetorical flourishes rather than sweeping lyricism.

That said, this complete recording of the third book is superior to the two other available versions: Delitiae Musicae's on Naxos and that by Quintetto Vocale Italiano from 1965 on Newton Classics. La Compagnia's customary alertness to the meaning of particular words as well as the narrative is much in evidence as in the 'reporting' of the lover's actions in *Deh se già*, and in the cheery *Meraviglia d'Amore*, though the downward transpositions here and elsewhere rob some items of their brightness.

The five voices are joined by a sixth in *Donna, se m'ancidete* and the larger group continues to maintain the same clarity of texture and articulation, as well as excellent tuning. Oddly, however, the old Quintetto Vocale Italiano version seems to have found a more interesting way of projecting the phrasing in this work, despite some rough tuning and awful sound quality. The liner notes are good but the writer seems to have prepared his copy before the track order was finally decided. The pieces are not presented in the same order as Gesualdo's publication. *Anthony Pryer*

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
RECORDING ★★★★★



PALESTRINA

Missa Papae Marcelli; Motets

Sistine Chapel Choir/Massimo Palombella
DG 479 6131 60:29 mins

Last year Massimo Palombella and the Sistine chapel issued their *Cantate Domino* disc which made similar claims to those here regarding its approach – recording in the Sistine Chapel guarantees the 'aesthetic relevance' of the performances (perhaps acoustically, though not in liturgical terms since there is no enfaming service); their use of a fluctuating beat helps shape and highlight the text; and the sound will be 'intimate' as befits the space. When performing Palestrina's *Pope Marcellus* Mass they also miss out the culminating seven-voice *Agnus* because it is not found in the earliest print (1567).

The approach to the Mass shows a solid understanding of the conventions of singing these texts. The 'Cum sancto' section of the Gloria is lively, the 'Et incarnatus'

BACKGROUND TO...

Mohammed Fairouz

(b1985)
The Arab-American composer, resident in New York, has written predominantly vocal works:



his first song – composed aged seven – was a setting of Oscar Wilde's poem *The True Knowledge*. A pupil of Gunther Schuller and György Ligeti, Fairouz has been noted for his large-scale works which engage with major geopolitical and philosophical themes. He has confessed to being 'obsessed with words' and has set a wide range of writers including Seamus Heaney and the Israeli poet Yehuda Amichai.

REISSUES

Reviewed by Paul Riley

JS BACH

Missae Breves

Cantus Cölln/Konrad Junghänel
Harmonia Mundi HMY 2921939-40
 (2007) 111:32 mins (2 discs)



A couple of under-involving solos aside, beautifully recorded, executed with the lightest of touches; there's an easeful rapprochement between voices and instruments at one with Bach's suave intimacy.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 RECORDING ★★★★★

HANDEL

Solomon

Soloists; RIAS Kammerchor; Akademie
 Für Alte Musik Berlin/Daniel Reuss
Harmonia Mundi HMY 2921949-50
 (2007) 154:31 mins (2 discs)



With Sarah Connolly and Caroline Sampson appearing for the prosecution, it doesn't require

the judgment of Solomon to predict a favourable outcome even if the chorus sometimes trades commitment for mere efficiency.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 RECORDING ★★★★★

MENDELSSOHN

Paulus

Soloists; La Chapelle Royale; Collegium
 Vocale; Orchestre de Champs-Élysées/
 Philippe Herreweghe
Harmonia Mundi HMY 2921584-85
 (1996) 128:36 mins (2 discs)



Matthias Goerne's noble Paulus is the standout in Herreweghe's scrupulously nuanced, broadly conceived, and warmly delivered account of an oratorio perennially overshadowed by its better-known sibling *Elijah*.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 RECORDING ★★★★★

MONTEVERDI

Madrigali Guerrieri et Amoris

Concerto Vocale/René Jacobs
Harmonia Mundi HMY 2921736-37 (2002)
 155:55 mins (2 discs)



Concerto Italiano might enjoy a native idiomatic edge but no one could accuse Jacobs of short-changing Monteverdi's dramatic genius. Cockily red in tooth and claw, judiciously plaintive; a must-have set.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 RECORDING ★★★★★

from the Credo slower and more reflective, the Hosanna is joyful, and so on. However, some delicate musical details are obscured, such as the scalic runs at 'Et in Spiritum Sanctum' from the Credo, and the transposition down a third from the notated score robs some exultant sections – for example, the end of the Sanctus – of their lofty intensity.

The motets on the disc have been selected to reflect the Holy Year of Mercy declared by the Pope in 2015. *O bone Jesu* is a relatively simple chordal piece that is rendered sensitively, but *Confirma hoc* lacks shape and sounds inconsequential. Recording in the Sistine Chapel must be difficult, but the lower voices can sound muddy and indistinct, as in the Hosanna of the Mass and elsewhere. *Anthony Pryer*

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 RECORDING ★★★★★



VAUGHAN WILLIAMS

Purer than Pearl: Eight Songs from The Poisoned Kiss (arr. A Williams); Songs and Duets for voice, piano and violin

Mary Bevan, Jennifer Johnston, Nicky Spence, Johnny Herford; Thomas Gould (violin), William Vann (piano)
Albion ALBCD 029 67:07 mins

Discoveries: Three Nocturnes; A Road All Paved with Stars; Stricken Peninsula; Four Last Songs
 Jennifer Johnston (mezzo-soprano), Roderick Williams (baritone); BBC Symphony Orchestra/Martyn Brabbins
Albion ALBCD 028 64:23 mins

How is it that we're still discovering new things by Vaughan Williams nearly 60 years after his death? Inevitably these two discs offer a very mixed assortment, especially the collections of songs *Purer than Pearl*. Given that the first few songs on that disc were written when he was entering his twenties, it's not surprising that the Vaughan Williams we know takes a little while to disentangle himself from the heavy trappings of Victorian drawing-room balladry. But then, suddenly, there he is in *Linden Lea* – and now we understand a little more clearly how he got there. The best surprises however are largely – aptly – in the disc called *Discoveries*, and especially in the Whitman-based *Three Nocturnes*, sung here radiantly by Roderick Williams. Anthony Payne's gorgeous, idiosyncratic orchestrations of Nos 1 and 3 may

emphasise resemblances to other, better-known works, but still the pre-echoes of the *Pastoral* Symphony are striking. Did Vaughan Williams have the association with the words 'Smile O voluptuous cold-breathed earth!' at the back of his mind when he (apparently) drew on this music in the Symphony's first movement? The *Four Last Songs*, again Payne orchestrations, are on the face of it slighter than Strauss's famous cycle. But they are still very touching, not least as a testimony – like the Strauss – to enduring love. (The poet is the composer's wife, Ursula.)

Both discs contain imaginative digests, or perhaps 'taster menus', by composer Adrian Williams from the opera *The Poisoned Kiss*. For those who, like me, are agnostic about the opera itself, these are excellent ways to enjoy the undeniably fine music – in fact quite a lot of it sounds rather better extracted from its original context. Williams's 'Symphonic Rhapsody' *A Road All Paved With Stars* (on *Discoveries*) makes the case for going back to opera slightly more enticingly than the collection *Eight Songs from The Poisoned Kiss* on *Purer than Pearl*, though Mary Bevan, Nicky Spence and pianist William Vann plead the cause for the last three numbers very persuasively. Performances and recordings are generally high quality, but the Williams-Brabbins *Three Nocturnes* is the stand-out for me – performance, music itself, everything. *Stephen Johnson*

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 RECORDING ★★★★★



FEMINA MODERNA

Works by Larsen, Klockar, Tarrodi, Auerbach, Cederberg-Orreteg, McDowall, Monnagotla, Forte, Grigorjeva, Lofberg, Rehnqvist, Rosenberg and Lindsjo

Allmänna Sängen/Maria Goundorina
BIS BIS-2224 75:53 mins

Founded in 1830, Uppsala's Allmänna Sängen admitted female singers in 1963. Fifty years later, under director Maria Goundorina, it launched a competition for new music by women composers. Two prizewinning entries, Anna-Karin Klockar's *Speeches* and Maria Löfberg's *Sandskrift*, are included in this recording of works by 13 living composers, opening with Libby Larsen's *Songs of Youth and Pleasure* (1986), a set of four madrigals with

much fa-la-la-ing and intermittent flushes of post-Romantic dew.

The choir's sound is fresh and direct. Its ensemble is tight and its diction crisp. But you'd struggle to describe much of this music as modern, and the wit, grit and sensuality of recent works by Kate Honey and Freya Waley-Cohen is absent. There are too many rag-rolled cluster chords, and too much cod-Renaissance frippery, but the same can be said of many recent choral works by male composers. *Speeches* (2015) has strong ideas and a terrific text but the energy dissipates in the second and third sections. Karin Rehnqvist's *Tilt* (1985) and Susanna Rosenberg's *Pust* (1998) have more snap and bite, Lera Auerbach's *Lullaby* (2002) is cool and tender, while Tebogo Monnagotla's *Apelinen har mognat* (2000) teases playfully at *sprechstimme*. *Anna Picard*

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 RECORDING ★★★★★



THE FRANKLIN EFFECT

Works by Frances-Hoad, Plowman, Thompson and Whitley
 Electric Voice Theatre

First Hand Records FHR51 47:34 mins

Here's a novel recording idea – part musical experience, part science lesson. *The Franklin Effect* showcases music inspired by the work of early-20th-century Rosalind Franklin, an X-ray crystallographer without whose work Francis Crick and James Watson might not have made their landmark discovery of the double-helix structure of DNA. It's a celebration of women's research and creativity, too: as part of Electric Voice Theatre's Minerva Scientifics Project, four scientists met with four composers and four singers to create the works on this excellently-performed, mind-stretching disc.

I don't think I've ever heard the words 'biological properties of dioxypentose nucleic acid' or 'Kirsten ras oncogene homolog' set to music before – and there's plenty of technical terminology that'll have you heading to Google. But all the composers have brought imagination to their works, and there are fascinating sounds aplenty, from unusual vocalisations to barbershop nonchalance, traditional Bulgarian singing and cool Medieval beauty. *Rebecca Franks*

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
 RECORDING ★★★★★



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CHAMBER

The *Kuss Quartet* bring out Brahms's playfulness, while the *Goldmund Quartet* players demonstrate enviable rapport in Haydn; violist *Michael Tree* joins the *Dover Quartet* in Mozart's C minor Quintet; and clarinetist *Emma Johnson* goes to town with a little jazz

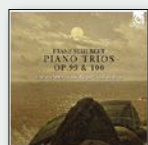
BBC MUSIC CHAMBER CHOICE

Well-tempered Schubert

Erica Jeal admires characterful playing by Andreas Staier and friends



TRANSPARENTLY CLEAR:
Andreas Staier's fortepiano
proves ideal for Schubert



SCHUBERT

**Piano Trios, Opp. 99 & 100;
Nocturne, D897**

Daniel Sepec (violin), Roel Dieltiens
(cello), Andreas Staier (fortepiano)
Harmonia Mundi HMC 902233-34
90:24 mins (2 discs)

It's the use of period instruments that makes this recording stand out from other excellent accounts of Schubert's two late piano trios. Andreas Staier plays a modern copy of an 1827 Viennese fortepiano that would have been brand spanking new when Op. 100 (D929) was composed. Along with the astringent, gut-stringed tone of violinist Daniel

Sepec and cellist Roel Dieltiens, this lends the performance a revealing transparency.

More importantly, the players catch just the right Schubertian balance of poise and profundity, bringing a light touch to the opening of Op. 99 (D898) – the breeziness dissipates artfully when the music

**The players catch just
the right balance of
poise and profundity**

later nudges into the minor key – and to the zestful piano scales in the first movement of Op. 100. There is never any lack of momentum. Perhaps in the slow movement of Op. 99 some expressive tuning from Dieltiens creates the odd sour moment, but this is fleeting. The recording puts a good deal of space around the

instruments, especially noticeable at the start of the second movement of Op. 100, with the piano on tiptoe accompanying the cello – a movement that goes on to acquire considerable drama and menace. There's plenty of colour, from subtly glassy on-the-bridge effects to a full-on stamping and jangling in the *scherzo* of Op. 100 (one pictures Sepec with cymbals on his knees like some kind of high-class one-man band, but it's probably just the fortepiano's Janissary Bell pedal). A gorgeously sustained account of the Nocturne (D897) completes this set.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
RECORDING ★★★★★



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ABRAHAMSEN

Air; Three Little Nocturnes

SØRENSEN

**It is a Pain Flowing Down Slowly on
a White Wall; Sigrid's Lullaby**

Frøde Haltli (accordion);
Trondheim Soloists; Arditti Quartet
ECM 481 2802 43:67 mins

Whatever its folk credentials, the accordion has also long attracted the attention of classical composers: Tchaikovsky, Hindemith and Berg all wrote for it. This arresting disc presents works by contemporary Danish composers, and showcases the exceptional talent of Norwegian accordionist, Frøde Haltli.

The pairing of strings and accordion proves a glorious combination and the disc's two ensemble works are much the most affecting. While the accordion can hold its own as a solo voice, it can also creep almost imperceptibly among string textures, subtly shifting the ensemble's timbre to mesmeric effect. Bent Sørensen's one-movement concerto for accordion and string orchestra, *It is Pain Flowing Down Slowly on a White Wall*, makes magical use of these elusive overlaps of tone colour in a powerfully moving work.

Hans Abrahamsen's *Three Little Nocturnes* (2008) sees Haltli joined by the Arditti Quartet (on particularly radiant form). These precise, glimmering miniatures make vivid use of string harmonics and, in the whirling central movement, draw wickedly on the accordion's traditional soundworld with its 'oom-pah-pah' figuration.

Two other works for accordion alone further explore the instrument's capacity for harmonic complexity and haunting expression, completing this excellent introduction to a subtle and versatile instrument. *Kate Wakeling*
PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
RECORDING ★★★★★



AUERBACH

Arcanum

SHOSTAKOVICH

24 Preludes, Op. 34 (arr. Auerbach)

Kim Kashkashian (viola),

Lera Auerbach (piano)

ECM 481 2322 58:06 mins

Lera Auerbach arranged Shostakovich's Op. 34 Preludes for viola and piano since, she explains, the composer's Viola Sonata 'is a very late work, while the Preludes are an early work and very different. This way violists can enjoy both sides of Shostakovich.' It was clearly also a convenient work to present alongside her Sonata for Viola and Piano, *Arcanum*, toured by Kim Kashkashian and Auerbach in 2013 when this recording was made.

Predictably, Shostakovich's 24 pieces emerge with variable success, but Auerbach's arrangements are so imaginative that only occasionally does one become aware of the music being divided between the two instruments: No. 14 in E flat minor, a dramatic and horrifying crescendo in its original guise, does not readily offer itself to duo arrangement, and is reduced to self-conscious melodrama in Auerbach's necessarily contrived 'solution'. Others, though, are strikingly successful, such as No. 17 in A flat major with the viola a husky-toned chanteuse to spare piano accompaniment.

Undoubtedly the main attraction, though, is Auerbach's Sonata, the partnership between viola and piano more equal and richer in potential. Hauntingly beautiful, the Sonata at times appears a child of early Messiaen and Ravel in his most advanced harmonic style. *Daniel Jaffe*

PERFORMANCE

★★★★

RECORDING

★★★★



BEETHOVEN

String Quartets: No. 5 in A, Op. 18/5; No. 13 in B flat, Op. 130

Cremona Quartet

Audite 92.685 (hybrid CD/SACD)

70:44 mins

This disc came as a disappointment after my extremely positive feelings about the earlier volumes in the Cremona Quartet's Beethoven series.



MESMERISING:
Frode Haltli adds a
subtle touch of colour
to Sørensen's strings

I still find what they do is interesting and suggestive, but in the case of the B flat Quartet Op. 130 – the one which Beethoven himself found most moving, and which I normally do even though it isn't necessarily the greatest – I was puzzled.

First, however, they are well up to their usual standard in the exhilarating performance of the A major Quartet Op. 18 No. 5, with its wonderfully peremptory opening and its general air of a youthful genius in confident possession of his unique powers. The notes suggest a strong influence from Mozart's A major Quartet, but it is Haydn who springs immediately to mind with his perpetual surprises, many of them mischievous. The slow movement is especially enjoyable, with a routine theme followed by ever more inventive variations.

Unfortunately the Cremonas decided to play Op. 130 without the Grosse Fuge, the original finale much later described by Stravinsky as 'perpetually contemporary'. Its first audience found it incomprehensible and Beethoven wrote the substitute finale, which we hear here – the original finale is on Volume 3. To me the first five movements seem to demand it. What we do have is some unpleasantly bulging playing in the brief second movement and exaggerated lurchings in the fourth. Most disappointing and surprising of all is the prosaically played Cavatina, Beethoven's most intimate music, played considerably too fast and it would seem deliberately unexpressive. The edginess of the recording does not help. I have listened several times and I'm bewildered. *Michael Tanner*

PERFORMANCE

★★

RECORDING

★★★★



BRAHMS

String Quartet No. 3; Sommerabend; Mondenschein; Wie Melodien zieht es mir

SCHOENBERG

String Quartet No. 2

Kuss Quartet; Mojca Erdmann (soprano)

Onyx ONYX 4166 73:29 mins

Brahms's Quartet No. 3 finds him in unusually playful mood. The *Vivace* gallops in with such a display of rhythmic cross-cutting, it could be a Mozartian dance finale that's arrived unfashionably early. The Kuss Quartet artfully exploits its disruptive mischief and innate asymmetry. They are also nicely stealthy in the elusive second subject, as it creeps around in the harmonic undergrowth of the development before emerging into rational daylight. Violist William Coleman, duetting with cellist Mikayel Haknazaryan, produces an unashamedly gorgeous third movement, just as 'amorous and affectionate' as Brahms described it. The mock-rustic final theme spawns a cavalcade of variations, each exquisitely characterised, leading with ingenious inevitability back to the Quartet's first themes. Wit lights up this account, every joke perfectly timed, every nuance explored.

If Brahms turns cartwheels with the Classical style, Schoenberg bids it farewell as we are plunged into the anxious world of his Second Quartet. Again we are in safe hands: the Kuss breathes its surging lines with commanding confidence balanced with questioning humility. *Mässig* has

a spacious grandeur, while *Sehr rasch* is bitingly articulate. Perhaps we just miss extremes of *pianissimo*. Mojca Erdmann lends expressive power to the 'Litanei': her 'Entrückung' is perhaps more volubly torrid than the cooler, remote beauty of Sandrine Piau (Diotima Quartet) or Christiane Oelze (Leipzig Quartet). She is in her element for three Brahms songs, sung with touching simplicity and radiant focus. *Helen Wallace*

PERFORMANCE

★★★★

RECORDING

★★★★



HAYDN

String Quartets in B flat, Op. 1/1; in G, Op. 33/5; in G, Op. 77/1

Goldmund Quartet

Naxos 8.573701 56:38 mins

This release rather neatly encapsulates Haydn's far-reaching development as the 'father' of the string quartet. He was still an impecunious Viennese freelance in his mid twenties when he wrote his first, divertimento-like set in the 1750s, yet the five brief movements of Op. 1 No. 1 already have a bright liveliness of invention, with something more sustained in the central *Adagio*. By 1780, when he composed Op. 33 No. 1, his name had become a by-word for originality throughout Europe, epitomised by the way the opening movement begins with its ending. And in Op. 77 No. 1, his second-to-last-completed quartet from 1799, the mature composer reviews his mastery in spacious forms and richly-worked textures, while hinting, in the almost Beethovenian trio of his *scherzo*, at still further innovations to come.

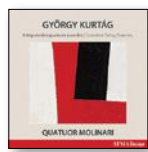
Maybe the programme's impact is slightly qualified by the choice of two quartets in the same key, but it is quite beautifully performed. Three of the four young players of the Goldmund Quartet were already playing chamber music together in their Munich schooldays, and their rapport tells in the unanimity, balance and radiance of their articulation and sound, while their wide variation of nuance, colour and vibrato suggests a searching musicality. Perhaps a certain depth escapes them as yet – there are slower, more gravely intense accounts of the aria-like *Largo* of Op. 33 No. 5 – but this will surely come. The church recording is incisive and full without undue resonance. *Bayan Northcott*

PERFORMANCE

★★★★

RECORDING

★★★★



KURTÁG

Complete string quartets

Molinari Quartet

ATMA Classique ACD 2 2705 61:12 mins

Kurtág wrote his First String Quartet (1959) after spending days in a Paris library copying out Webern's works. You can hear it. But while its brevity and fractured apprehension resonate, this was the moment the Hungarian began to forge his own language, one of silences, scattered pitches, jittery ostinatos and microtonal meshes, beside which Webern's music sounds positively Romantic in its sustained development. A Webern canon, too, is in the DNA of *Officium Breve*, Op. 28, one of Kurtág's most performed pieces and an absolute *tour de force*. After a chain of tiny, gestural canons, a single insistent pulsing pitch pools into a flood of tone: the impact is extraordinary. Its finale, *Arioso interrotto*, receives here the tenderest of caresses.

From 1996, the Keller Quartet (ECM) give bolder, more spacious and highly dramatised performances in a slightly more resonant acoustic. The tiny *Aus der Ferne III* is intensely expressive in their hands, while in the Molinari's it's almost frozen alive: both approaches are effective. Where the latter shine is in the luminescent,



TRANSFORMING MUSIC:
the quartet Meta4 spin
Saariaho's unique sound

mirage-like microludes of *Hommage à Mihály András*.

Kurtág's shadow-world is alive with the whispers of those he reveres, transformed in the crucible of his ear. The Keller set remains a benchmark, yet the Molinari offer a clutch of treasurable newer pieces: there's wit in Op. 44 *Moments musicaux* with its vibrant rhythmic games, tangy metal mutes, medieval hocketing and whistling birds, at its heart a searing elegy for pianist György Sebok. The *Arioso* (2009), too, makes a coda of spellbound consolation.

Helen Wallace

PERFORMANCE

RECORDING

★★★★

★★★



MOZART

String Quartets: No. 22 in B flat, K589; No. 23 in F, K590; String Quintet No. 2 in C minor, K406

Dover Quartet; Michael Tree (viola)

Cedille CDR 90000167 73:10 mins

The Dover Quartet comprises four young players who came together at Curtis Institute in Philadelphia, where they were coached by members of the renowned Guarneri Quartet. This new release, their first, is something of a tribute to their mentors: including the same pair of Mozart quartets as the Guarneri put out on their premiere disc 50 years ago, and with Michael Tree of the Guarneri sitting in as second viola in the Mozart Quintet. And while the Dover Quartet is perhaps less gritty and volatile – if no less expressive – than the Guarneri

in more excitable moments, these readings are very much in the Guarneri tradition, emphasising blend and consistency of vibrato rather than using varying degrees of vibrato as a colouristic device after the manner of more recent 'period' quartets.

Mozart wrote his late quartets to a commission from the cello-playing King of Prussia (who never paid for them). They are often assessed as less perfect and profound than the six earlier quartets he had dedicated to Haydn – partly because, in spotlighting the cello, Mozart created some high-lying phrases and tricky-to-balance quartet textures.

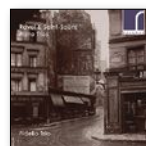
It is not the least virtue of these new readings to convince the ear that such passages, far from sounding awkward, are fresh and innovative. The Dover Quartet also demonstrate how successfully, in transcribing his Wind Serenade in C minor, K 406 into idiomatic writing for five string players, Mozart managed to preserve the starkness and intensity of the original. The recording is close-up and involving. *Bayan Northcott*

PERFORMANCE

RECORDING

★★★★

★★★★



RAVEL • SAINT-SAËNS

Ravel: Piano Trio;
Saint-Saëns: Piano Trio No. 2

Fidelio Trio

Resonus Trio RES10173 59:58 mins

Full marks to whoever thought of pairing Ravel's Piano Trio with Saint-Saëns's second one. Not only do they

offer plenty in the way of contrasting textures, but we can hear evidence of Ravel's admiration for the older composer's command of structure – not least in his development of the Basque *zortzico* rhythm (5 beats, tum tuum ti tuum ti): surprisingly, it's Saint-Saëns who, in his *scherzo*, uses it in its pure form whereas Ravel, despite his Basque heritage, adds an extra three beats.

Both composers subscribed to the dogma that the true test of form is continuity of interest, and for me there's not a dull moment anywhere on the disc. The Fidelio Trio's virtuosity is of a high order, with Mary Dullea throwing off the piano fireworks in the Ravel 'Pantomime' with splendid élan. Balance between the three instruments is variable, with the violin occasionally overpowered by the piano, especially in the Saint-Saëns, where low piano octaves are rather obtrusive.

My only real regret is that, in the first movement of the Ravel (after figure 7), Ravel's indications are ignored for alternating bars in strict tempo with those 'held back' (*en retenu*). I'm not saying for a moment that it's easy to bring off, but this sense of resistance to the ongoing flow is crucial in maintaining the overall anxious, querying tone of the movement, audible elsewhere in the highly chromatic harmonies. The final C major is a hard-won victory.

Roger Nichols

PERFORMANCE

RECORDING

★★★★

★★★



SAARIAHO

Chamber works for strings, Vol. 2: *Fleurs de Neige*; *Aure*; *Du gick, flög*; *Nocturne, Changing Light*; *...de la Terre*; *Die Aussicht*; *Terra Memoria*

Meta4; Pia Freund (soprano)

Ondine ODE 1242-2 60:04 mins

The second volume of Meta4's championing of Kaija Saariaho's chamber works for strings presents, fascinatingly, a fine gossamer web of transformation and re-invention. Only *Terra Memoria*, Saariaho's second string quartet, dating from 2006, stands alone in its original single form – and it's not only the most substantial (nearly 20 minutes) work on the disc, but also the most robustly inventive. Dedicated 'for those departed', *Terra Memoria* celebrates both the subtle illusions of stasis and the transformative conjurings of Saariaho's unique composing

BACKGROUND TO...



Lera Auerbach

(b1973)

Born in Chelyabinsk in the Ural Mountains, Lera Auerbach seized

an opportunity to defect from the Soviet Union when touring New York as a pianist in 1991: she has lived in that city ever since. She subsequently attended the Manhattan School of Music, then the Juilliard School where she studied piano under Joseph Kalichstein, and composition under Milton Babbitt. She made her Carnegie Hall debut in 2002, performing her own Suite for violin, piano and orchestra with Gidon Kremer conducting the Kremerata Baltica.

imagination; and here this symbolises both the perfect whole of achieved lives, and the continuing mutations of memory. The other substantial work is ... *de la Terre* (1991), an abstract, for violin and electronics (Antti Tikkanen and Marko Myohanen), from Saariaho's dance piece, *Earth*. It's a far-extending plain of bird chirrupings, human whisperings, exhalations and resonances, with a foreground of filigree violin patternings. And it tends to outstay its welcome.

And then the metamorphosed miniatures, re-cast from their original instrumentation (see Kimmo Korhonen's excellent notes for details): there are two 'homages': *Aure*, a breath of lamenting air for Dutilleux, now for violin and viola; and three works which showcase Pia Freund's eloquent soprano. *Du gick, flog* (You went, flew), for soprano and cello, catches spare words as they fly; and *Die Aussicht* (Vista) sets Hölderlin, now for voice and string quartet. Best of all, there's *Changing Light*, which sets monotonic and declamatory voice against ecstatic violin in a meditation on creation and life by Rabbi Jules Harlow. *Hilary Finch*

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
RECORDING ★★★★★



TCHAIKOVSKY

String Quartets Nos 1 & 3

Heath Quartet
Harmonia Mundi HMU 907665
66:24 mins

Can this be the same quartet which has brought us such bracing Tippett and Bartók? Well, no one can fine-tune to every style, and this just isn't the Heaths' natural territory. The intonation, the teamwork and the solos are all first-rate. But if the players miss what's most impressive about the two Tchaikovsky quartets here – the light, gay touches of the First and the deep-veined tragedy in parts of the Third – then they need to find something else here. Instead of an alternative personality, there's something wrong in every movement.

That includes the rushing in the opening *Moderato e semplice* of No. 1, the unloving sound in the *Andante cantabile* and in nearly every lyric passage – especially compromised by a dry recording that's at such an unrelentingly forward, high level that the sound constantly needs adjusting – and the clipped wings in what should be flights of fancy (especially

in the two finales and the scherzo of No. 2). Just when you think a passage is going well, like the ardent, bittersweet descending violin melody which comes as balm to the funeral-march rhythms and dirges of the Second's slow movement, something goes awry (in this case an unnecessary pressing in the melody's extension). And surely it's possible to produce more volume even with the mutes on? There's one final drawback – what about the Second Quartet, which is equally inventive and has the most powerful slow movement? Two CDs for the price of one might have solved that gaping omission. *David Nice*

PERFORMANCE ★★
RECORDING ★★



CLARINET GOES TO TOWN

Emma Johnson (clarinet), Paul Clarvis (percussion), John Lenehan (piano), Carducci Quartet

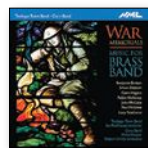
Nimbus Alliance NI 6335 75:14 mins

This collection of two dozen 'lollipops' provides a showcase for Emma Johnson's cultured style and impeccable technique. On six of the tracks, she's joined by the Carducci Quartet: they contribute idiomatic string effects to fast and light accounts of Piazzolla's *Libertango* and Monti's *Czárdás*, and accompany a reflective reading of Rachmaninov's *Vocalise* and a knockout performance of Giampieri's variations on *The Carnival of Venice*. On six more, she's partnered by the excellent John Lenehan: these items include some genuine clarinet-and-piano repertoire such as William Lloyd Webber's pretty *Frensham Pond*, some authorised transcriptions including Ravel's languid *Pièce en forme de Habanera* and Elgar's lovely *Canto popolare*, and some new arrangements such as a successful makeover of a Chopin Nocturne.

The other dozen tracks are played by the trio of Johnson, Lenehan and the drummer Paul Clarvis. The percussion adds some unnecessary punctuation to Debussy's *Golliwog's Cakewalk*, but lends momentum to Alec Templeton's jazzy fugue *Bach Goes to Town*. However, when the repertoire moves into genuine jazz territory – some numbers from New Orleans, others associated with the Benny Goodman Trio – Johnson's straight tone, neat phrasing and on-the-beat precision sound polite

and out of place. A handful of these pieces scattered through the disc might have provided lively contrast; relying on them so much seems a mistake. *Anthony Burton*

PERFORMANCE ★★★
RECORDING ★★★★★



WAR MEMORIALS: *Music for Brass Band*

Works by Britten, Holloway, McCabe, Pankhurst, Dobson, McGhee & Higgins

Tredegear Town Band/Ian Porthouse; Cory Band/Philip Harper, Robert Childs
NMC NMC D226 79:15 mins

Though called *War Memorials*, the disc also commemorates the genius of Benjamin Britten, a noted pacifist. His rarely heard *Occasional Overture*, written for the launch of the BBC's Third Programme in 1946, opens the CD, performed in Paul Hindmarsh's arrangement for brass band. The Tredegear Town Band reveals the work's winning combination of nonchalance and bustling virtuosity, its optimistic vision of post-war reconstruction complementing the often fraught and sombre character of much of the rest of the programme.

Of the other works, the first of Holloway's *War Memorials*, 'Men Marching', strikes deepest. Completed in 1982, its melange of melodies and harmonic sequences suggest the half-remembered, half-improvised music that might go through the mind of a First World War soldier, complementing and echoing his monotonous and then shocking existence to moving and disturbing effect. This effectively segues into a montage of marching feet and a young man's voice reading a letter from the trenches during Christmas 1914 – the opening sounds of Lucy Pankhurst's *Voices*. This is a more straight-forwardly illustrative work, as is John McCabe's *The Maunsell Forts*, though the Cory Band demonstrates his keen ear for brass timbres.

The collectively composed *Diversions after Benjamin Britten* are interleaved with that composer's ingenious *St Edmundsbury Fanfares*, whose pithy playfulness contrast with the new pieces' more opaque and darker soundworlds. *Daniel Jaffé*

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
RECORDING ★★★★★

 Hear the BBC Music team give its verdict on this CD on our 'First Listen' podcast, available from iTunes and www.classical-music.com

REISSUES

Reviewed by Helen Wallace

BARTÓK • DVOŘÁK • MOZART

Mozart: String Quartet No. 2;
Bartók: String Quartet No. 3;
Dvořák: String Quartet No. 3
Juilliard Quartet

Orfeo 927161 B (1965) 77:01 mins



In the 1965 Salzburg Festival, the Juilliard's Mozart K499 is overripe though surprisingly fresh, while Bartók third is a *tour de force*. Dvořák No. 11 is a touch congested, rescued by a mercurial *Scherzo*.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
RECORDING ★★★★★

BEETHOVEN • BRAHMS • MOZART

Beethoven: Violin Sonata No. 9 (Kreutzer); Brahms: Violin Sonatas Nos 1-3; Mozart: Violin Sonata in B flat Kulenkampff (violin), Solti (piano)
Eloquence 480 6582 (1948-50)
116:50 mins (2 discs)



The noble Georg Kulenkampff with a sensitive young Solti. An initially tame *Kreutzer* turns tautly penetrating. Kulenkampff comes into his own in Brahms's Sonatas of long-reaching vision.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
RECORDING ★★★★★

ROSSINI • BOTTESINI

Rossini: Sonate a quattro Nos 1-6, etc;
Bottesini: Gran Duo Concertante
Accardo (violin); Musici
Eloquence 482 5103 (1972/79)
132:11 mins (2 discs)



The saturated, souped-up sound of these Rossini sonatas is very 1970s, a hint of the synthetic threatening to spoil naturally spirited performances. More fun is the second disc of curiosities.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
RECORDING ★★★★★

VIVALDI

Cello Sonatas; Prelude
Ceccato (cello); Accademia Ottoboni
Alpha ALPHA 325 (2013) 69:53 mins



Ottoboni's continuo group, enriched by double bass and theorbo, create a wonderfully shadowy canvas on to which Ceccato etches a radiantly poetic line. *Largos* are occasionally over-stretched, but *Allegros* vivaciously delicate.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
RECORDING ★★★★★

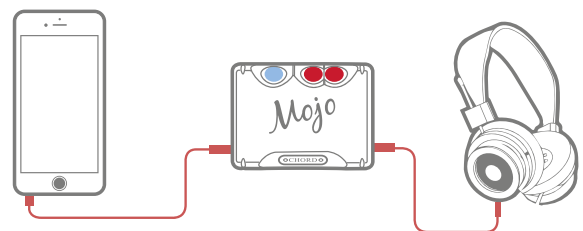


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INSTRUMENTAL

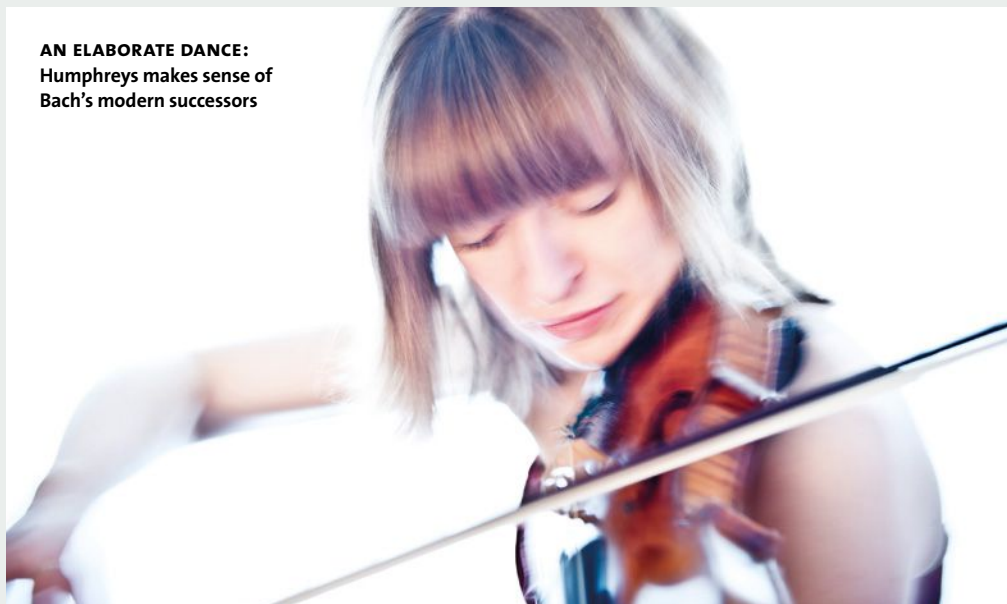
Jean-Efflam Bavouzet brings both character and virtuosity to Beethoven; *Lars Vogt* reaches moments of true greatness in Schubert; and *Peter King* is an affable guide to Bath Abbey's organ

MUSIC INSTRUMENTAL CHOICE

Building bridges with Bach

Fenella Humphreys proves a consummate violinist, says *Martin Cotton*

AN ELABORATE DANCE:
Humphreys makes sense of
Bach's modern successors



BACH 2 THE FUTURE, VOL. 2

Sutton: Arpeggiare Variations;
Ysaÿe: Solo Violin Sonata No. 3
(Ballade); **Beamish:** Intrada e Fuga;
JS Bach: Solo Violin Sonata No. 3
in C; **Maxwell Davies:** Sonatina for
Violin Alone; **Stravinsky:** Elégie;
Sibelius: En glad musikant

Fenella Humphreys (violin)
Champs Hill CHRCO 118 72:02 mins

Last year, I enthusiastically welcomed this project's first volume. This sequel is also impressive, both in the quality of the playing and the variety of music. Sutton's *Variations* uses arpeggiated figures, its intensity

matched by Humphreys's strong, focused playing, especially in the *lento* movement. In Ysaÿe's Third Sonata she yields nothing to the finest recordings in her accuracy and passion, the recording capturing the full range of her tone in a rich but not over-resonant acoustic.

In Ysaÿe's Third Sonata she yields nothing to the finest recordings

In Beamish's *Intrada*, a meditative piece with a folk-like insistence on a drone note, double stops are immaculately delivered, as they are in the complex textures of the Fuga, which augurs well for the second movement of the Bach, one of his most elaborate and extended fugues. There's a little strain in

some of the thicker textures, but the music always has direction and stays close to its dance roots, and the slow movements have an alluring flexibility. Modelled on the Bach Sonata, Maxwell Davies's Sonatina, one of his last works, is an extended single movement, much of it elegiac though with some characteristic Scots inflections; again Humphreys finds the dance feel in the faster sections. Its involving 11-and-a-half minutes lead naturally to the veiled, muted sounds of Stravinsky's Elégie, before the Sibelius *bonne bouche*.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
RECORDING ★★★★★



ON THE WEBSITE

Hear extracts from this recording and the rest of this month's choices on the **BBC Music Magazine website**
www.classical-music.com



BEETHOVEN

Piano Sonatas, Vol. 3: Opp. 54, 57, 78, 79, 81a, 90, 101, 106, 109, 110, 111
Jean-Efflam Bavouzet (piano)
Chandos CHAN 10925(3)
211:40 mins (3 discs)

After recording an accomplished Haydn sonata cycle, Jean-Efflam Bavouzet has now completed a Beethoven one. And if this latter provides a suitable outlet for his virtuosity, it also gives great scope to his artistry. Presenting the last 11 sonatas in chronological order, his final three-CD release begins with a sweetly unassuming account of Op. 54, the first movement capriciously playful, and the *perpetuum mobile* pellucid.

As Bavouzet uses very little pedal, his characteristic sound is clean and dry, and when he gives us histrionics they are Beethoven's own; there's nothing vain or pretentiously 'original' in these interpretations. The first movement of his *Appassionata* is elegant, forceful, and seemingly weightless, while the variations of the *Andante* start with a plainness which only gradually achieves eloquence; the concluding *Allegro* has an improvisatory freshness. In Bavouzet's hands Op. 78 becomes companionable, even Puckish, while the aggressively 'simple' (Beethoven's word) Op. 79 is given unusual muscularity and substance. The mood-changes of *Les adieux* are full-blooded, while the complementary movements of Op. 90 work like yin and yang: after the quasi-algebraic rigour of the first movement, the *allegretto*, 'not too fast and very singing', becomes a warmly animated conversation.

The last five sonatas are mostly magnificent. I have seldom heard so gracefully persuasive an account of Op. 101, whose elusive quality Bavouzet catches to perfection, and his *Hammerklavier* is edge-of-your-



FOCUS ON BACH:
harpsichordist
Zuzana Růžicková

A harpsichord pioneer

Record Review's **Andrew McGregor** revisits the first complete set of JS Bach's keyboard works



One of the most charismatic harpsichordists around now is drawing attention to a pioneering harpsichordist we've been in danger of forgetting. Zuzana Růžicková turns 90 in January, and Mahan Esfahani still visits her in Prague, saying that she's responsible for whatever is good in his playing – turn to p48 to read about her remarkable story. Růžicková's was first to record the complete keyboard works of JS Bach, whose music helped her transcend the adversity she's faced, and here are those records, made for Erato over a decade from 1965 (9029593044; 20 CDs).

They are newly remastered for modern ears; ears that Esfahani observes in his introduction may be surprised by interpretations that stand apart from current historically-informed ideas of Bach. In the *Well-Tempered Clavier*, we hear Růžicková alternating each phrase between the manuals of her instrument; speeds range between measured and slow, but the clarity of the counterpoint is exemplary, if a little metronomic.

The Aria of the *Goldberg Variations* immediately has

more of a sense of freedom and fantasy, while the weight and thickness of registration for some of the subsequent variations (on a contemporary Ammer instrument) is a little reminiscent of the revivalist Pleyel harpsichords Wanda Landowska played. But there's also refinement, and thoughtful ornamentation, despite a tendency towards stately speeds and pedantic articulation.

It's interesting hearing Růžicková's almost Romantic approach to the Bach-Vivaldi

Concertos, orchestrated in a way no modern player would likely contemplate,

with some quirky changes of registration. But the chief delights are the Bach sonatas with other musicians, cellist Pierre Fournier, and especially violinist Josef Suk, a stylish Bachian in his own right.

The last recording in the Erato set allows us to hear Růžicková with the Prague Soloists conducted by Eduard Fischer, with flautist Jean-Pierre Rampal and Suk in the A minor Concerto BWV 1044 and Brandenburg Concerto No. 5; statelier and heavier than modern HIP-sters, but with a sense of joy that transcends such considerations.

The chief delights in this Růžicková set are the Bach sonatas

seat stuff from start to finish. I don't think he begins with that notorious left-hand leap – his first B flat is an appoggiatura – but the first and last movements go like the wind, and with flawless accuracy. If the dynamics in the first movement of Op. 109 are a bit clumsy, and if Op. 110 is at times a shade too emphatic, his Op. 111 is majestic, with every effect finely calculated, and the *Arietta* moving from passionate plangency to a lift-off into space powered by immaculate trills and gossamer figurations.

Michael Church

PERFORMANCE

★★★★

RECORDING

★★★★



SCHUBERT

**Four Impromptus, D899;
Six German Dances, D820;
Moments musicaux, D780**

Lars Vogt (piano)

Ondine ODE 1285-2 66:30 mins

For all its interest, much of this disc strikes me as an exercise in contrived spontaneity, though that does vary from piece to piece. It is most egregious in the opening Impromptu. The first G is marked *fortissimo*, but these things are relative and Lars Vogt gives us a sound inconceivable to Schubert – probably to any artist before the 20th century. He follows it with an exaggerated pause before pulling around the melody (on which the rest of the Impromptu is a set of variations) to a grotesque degree, both in dynamics and in wild fluctuations of tempo.

Fortunately Vogt isn't always like that, and some of the playing is unaffected and moving, especially the *Moments musicaux*. That's true in the last of them above all, one of Schubert's simplest and deepest pieces in which, as so often with his mature pieces, it is impossible to tell whether he is breaking your heart or offering you heavenly consolation.

If only all of Vogt's playing were on this level, I would rate him as one of the all-time great pianists and artists. As it is, I am eager to listen to more recordings or performances by him, hoping that he can subdue his capriciousness into genuine expressiveness. The pieces that separate the set of Impromptus from the sublime *Moments musicaux* are the *Six German Dances*, very short pieces that only take just over six minutes altogether, but a reminder that Schubert wrote many pieces of

these tiny dimensions, which are mainly charming and carefree, and should be performed and recorded more often. *Michael Tanner*

PERFORMANCE

★★★★

RECORDING

★★★★



LEBANESE PIANO MUSIC

**Works by Fleihan, Khoury,
Gelalian, Baz and Succar**

Tatiana Primak-Khoury (piano)

Grand Piano GP 715 70 mins

Western classical music has long had a foothold in Lebanon, thanks partly to the French mandate after 1920 – even today, many Lebanese speak French as a second mother-tongue – and thanks partly to the fact that when Armenians fled there in droves during the Turkish genocide, many fine classical musicians fled with them. So it's no surprise that the one major figure among the otherwise minor-league composers on this disc should be Armenian: Boghos Gelalian began earning his living as a nightclub pianist, went on to play a key role in the popularisation of Arabic classical music, and stoically continued to give lessons in counterpoint throughout the worst days of the Lebanese civil war. His piano sonata *Tre Cicli* is a supremely accomplished work, with a fine command of piano sonorities in the turbulent outer movements, and grave beauty in its *Adagio malinconico*; both this and his graceful *Canzona e Toccata* deserve a place in the standard concert repertoire.

Georges Baz is another composer comfortable in his skin, and the miniatures of his *Esquisses* are an elegant tribute to Debussy and the French impressionists; Toufic Succar's *Variations sur un theme Oriental* are pure pastiche-Beethoven, and none the worse for that. Anis Fuleihan, whose Piano Sonata No. 9 Tatiana Primak-Khoury plays with easy authority – like everything else on the disc – draws inspiration from Bartók and Stravinsky, but with this music one senses a deeper identity-unease.

Houtaf Khoury is the youngest composer here and was schooled in the Ukraine: his Piano Sonata No. 3 *Pour un instant perdu...* bodies forth the ideas he has expressed to the writer of the programme note. He despairs of his country's political class, and pins his hope on its artists:

one hears Shostakovich hovering over the questioning first movement, the second moves ominously beneath an ice-cold surface, and the last ends sadly with a gesture of impotence.

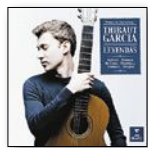
Michael Church

PERFORMANCE

★★★★

RECORDING

★★★★



LEYENDAS

Works by Albeniz, Manjón, Falla*, Rodrigo, Piazzolla and Tarrega

Thibaut Garcia (guitar),

*Edgar Moreau (cello)

Warner 9029595463 66:30 mins

The young French guitarist Thibaut Garcia impressed us with his 2014 recording of Berio, and other adventurous repertoire. This is more standard, juicy Latin stuff: 'legends' in every sense.

The title track sets the tone: *Asturias/Leyenda* (actually called 'Prelude' by Albéniz, and evoking hot Andalusian flamenco, not bagpipes of drizzly Asturias). Traditional Segovia-era arrangements bodge some important details (eg C for A sharp bass in the punched-chord climaxes); this smarter setting, by Garcia's teacher Olivier Chassain, better follows both letter and spirit of the piano original.

In the vivid Falla, Garcia turns accompanist to Edgar Moreau's singing cello. Moreau's breathing is rather distracting, but with defiant, thrusting energy (eg the 'Polo') and heart-stopping sadness ('Asturiana', 'Nana') these are lovely miniatures.

The inevitable *Alhambra* – the guitar equivalent of compulsory figures in skating – is dispatched consummately, and Garcia's control saves the floridly virtuosic Manjón from rambling. Rodrigo's dramatic homage to Falla features bell-like resonances and dignified restraint, but the disc highlight is Piazzolla's *Four Seasons*. No rustic picture-postcards here – these are urban, psychological seasons. Rush-hour momentum, caffeine highs, ennui, angst and closing-time loneliness are driven powerfully by the tango in Sérgio Assad's dazzling arrangements.

Garcia's smooth, rich and sweet sound and impeccable virtuosity, in a spacey and warm acoustic, may not be a totally individual voice yet. But this a delight for everyone, from the curious discovering the core Latin guitar repertoire, to collectors who want the best. Because this outstandingly played, well-balanced,

well-thought selection is definitely up among them. Rob Ainsley

PERFORMANCE

★★★★

RECORDING

★★★★



PETER KING PLAYS THE KLAISS ORGAN OF BATH ABBEY

DVD Works by Boely, Saint-Saens, Eben, Mendelssohn, JS Bach, Messiaen, Vienne and Reubke

Peter King (organ)

Regent REGDV003 69:37 mins

If Peter King can't show off Bath Abbey's Klaiss organ to its best advantage then nobody can. Sometime director of music, currently 'Organist Emeritus', King was responsible for the design of the instrument unveiled in 1997, and he proves an affable guide to its inner workings on a DVD that supplies an informative backstory to the companion recital CD; certainly it will commend itself to even those viewers who don't necessarily want their Messiaen gilded with images of the building's carved angels (however appropriate), or a selection of Advent and Christmas chorale preludes from Bach's *Orgelbüchlein* cut with shots of Bath Christmas Market. Quite what Nero adds to Saint-Saens's E flat Fantasia is anyone's guess, though shots of Bath's hot springs marry well with the fluty deliquescence of Vienne's *Naiades*. And having been introduced via DVD to the instrument's Baroque exotica, we're agog to hear the Cymbelstern sprinkle a dusting of 'jingle bells' over Bach's *In Dulci Jubilo*, and savour the silvery elation bestowed by the glockenspiel on *In dir ist Freude*.

King is a fine organist at the helm of a fine instrument, and steers Mendelssohn's E minor Fugue to a superbly articulated resplendent close. At lightning speed he scuds effortlessly up and down across three keyboards at the end of Eben's *Moto Ostinato* – sonically and visually spectacular – and he crowns an invigorating workout with Reubke's formidable Sonata on the 94th Psalm. The *Allegro con fuoco* snarls and spits; its Fugue bristles with Old Testament brimstone. Reubke to relish! Paul Riley

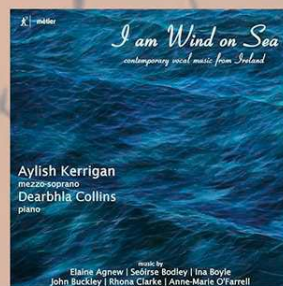
PERFORMANCE

★★★★

PICTURE & SOUND

★★★★

New Releases



I AM WIND ON SEA

AYLISH KERRIGAN /
DEARBHLA COLLINS

Contemporary vocal music from Ireland by Ina Boyle, Seóirse Bodley, John Buckley, Rhona Clarke, Elaine Agnew and Anne-Marie O'Farrell. Métier msv 28558

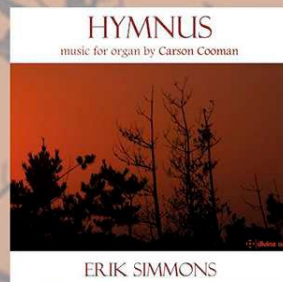


PRELUDES & FUGUES PIANO SONATAS

NATALIA ANDREEVA

Two excellent piano recital albums.

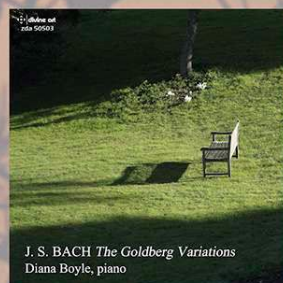
Divine Art dda 25139 & 25140



HYMNUS: MUSIC FOR ORGAN BY CARSON COOMAN

ERIK SIMMONS

The fourth album of organ music by the most prodigious young American composer. This program, like 'Litany' (dda 25116) is more liturgical and meditative in nature. Divine Art dda 25147



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BRIEF NOTES

Your quick listening guide to more new releases, including Herrmann's *Souvenirs de voyage* and Telemann concertos for natural horn and trumpet



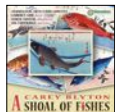
INSPIRING KREISLER:
Rosanne Phillippens's
Dedications is a 'joy'

Beethoven Symphonies Nos 1 & 4
London Philharmonic Orchestra/
Kurt Masur
LPO 0093



This fine recording of concerts from 2004 has been released for the first time as a tribute to Kurt Masur who died in 2015. The LPO plays with brisk energy and a full, sumptuous sound. (EC) ★★★★★

Blyton A Shoal of Fishes; A Catch for Wind Instruments; Five Diversions; Carp in the Rain; The Indian Coffee House Roof Garden Orchestra Tango; A Little Trio for Wind Instruments
Harriet Adie (harp); Chameleon Arts Wind Quintet; Ian Partridge (narrator); Derek Foster (vibraphone)
Sleeveless Records SLV 1012



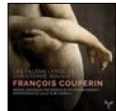
The composer of hit children's song *Banana in Pyjamas* (and nephew of Enid), Carey Blyton proves himself an artful composer in this charming, well performed collection of fishy wind quintets. (RF) ★★

Caetani String Quartets
Alauda Quartet
Brilliant Classics 95198BR



Roffredo Caetani's two delightfully amiable quartets from either side of the turn of the 20th century – the later one with a decidedly folksy feel – are played with freshness and zeal by the Alauda Quartet. (JP) ★★★★★

Couperin Ariane consolée par Bacchus; L'Apothéose de Lully; Apothéoses; Apollon persuade Lully et Corelli que la réunion des Goûts français et italien doit faire la perfection de la musique. Essai en forme d'ouverture
Stéphane Degout (baritone); Les Talens Lyriques/Christophe Rousset
Aparté AP130



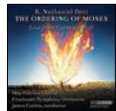
A newly discovered, charming cantata for baritone and continuo is lovingly rendered alongside stylish chamber works in praise of Lully and Corelli. Couperin pays homage to Italian music in his own Gallic way. (OC) ★★

Debussy Preludes, Book I (selection); 'Pour les sonorités opposées' from Etudes Book I
Sciarrino Piano Sonatas Nos 1-3
Jean-Pierre Collot (piano)
Winter & Winter 910 2372



Starlight drawn in charcoal: there's something apt about Robert Longo's cover CD image as Collot's soundworld is monochrome yet illuminates the music. His unsentimental Debussy is interspersed with bracing Sciarrino. (RF) ★★

Dett The Ordering of Moses
May Festival Chorus; Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra/James Conlon
Bridge BRIDGE 9462



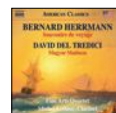
This brilliantly stirring 1937 oratorio – whose influences range from Handel to spirituals and which has an almost cinematic soundworld – receives its first commercial recording, live from Carnegie Hall. Excellent soloists with sensitive chorus and orchestra. (RF) ★★★★★

Haydn Piano sonatas
John O'Connor (piano)
Steinway & Sons STNS30058



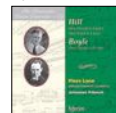
An enjoyable survey, played with wit and charm. A few instances of uneven ornamentation are small flies in the ointment. Very closely miked. (OC) ★★

Herrmann Souvenirs de voyage Del Tredici Magyar Madness
Fine Arts Quartet; Lethiec (clarinet)
Naxos 8.559796



Sensitive performances of Herrmann's lyrical, wistful Clarinet Quintet, and of David Del Tredici's 2006 *Magyar Madness*, inspired by Hungarian gypsy music. (RF) ★★★★★

Hill Piano Concerto in A; Piano Sonata in A Boyle Piano Concerto
Piers Lane (piano); Adelaide SO/
Johannes Fritzsche
Hyperion CDA 68135



Lane and friends make a great case for these Australian Romantic concertos. Hill's Concerto in A (a reworking of the Sonata) is particularly enjoyable with its plentiful tunes. (RF) ★★★★★

Kapustin Piano Sonata No. 1, etc; plus works by Schumann/Liszt & Chopin
Yuki Kondo (piano)
Etcetera KTC 1541



Romantic greats intriguingly coupled with the jazz-infused style of a late 20th-century Russian. It works well as a recital, though the Kapustin could be a little lighter on its feet. (JP) ★★

Klami • England Violin Concertos
Benjamin Schmid (violin); Oulu SO/
Johannes Gustavsson
Ondine ODE 12782



Two Finnish concertos, England's an anguished, meaty affair recalling 20th-century Russian music with hints of Bartók. Klami's playful concerto recalls Prokofiev and Stravinsky. Terrific accounts. (OC) ★★★★★

Schubert Symphony No. 5; Concert Piece in D, D485, etc
Kalló (violin); Capella Savaria/
McGegan Hungaroton HCD 32794



Schubert in lively, genial late-teenage form in four pieces from around 1816. Sadly, soloist and orchestra alike make rather heavy weather of it all. (JP) ★

Telemann Trumpet & Horn Concertos Jean-François & Pierre-Yves Madeuf (soloists); La Petite Bande/S Kujiken *Accent ACC 24318*



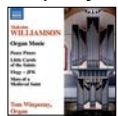
The thrilling, rustic call of a natural trumpet or horn is one of Baroque music's delights. The Madeuf brothers oblige with crystal-clear articulation and burnished, silvery tone. (OC) ★★★★★

Tyberg Masses Nos 1 & 2 South Dakota Chorale/Schmidt; Jacobson (organ) *Pentatone PTC 5186*



Premiere recordings of masses by Marcel Tyberg, an Austrian Jew who perished at Auschwitz. Dispiritingly ponderous music confounds the South Dakota Chorale's energy. (JP) ★★★

Williamson Organ music Winpenny (organ) *Naxos 8.571375-76*



The former Master of the Queen's Music's organ output owes a large debt to Messiaen. An attractive set brilliantly played, although there's no great masterpiece here. (OC) ★★★

America Again Works by Gould, Copland, Ellington, Harris et al Lara Downes (piano)

Dorian Sono Luminus DSL-92207



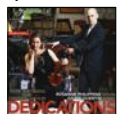
In this tribute to America, Lara Downes thoughtfully explores works from Samuel Coleridge-Taylor's 1905 spiritual-inspired *Deep River* to Dan Visconti's 2012 *Nocturne* from *Lonesome Roads*. (RF) ★★★

Camille & Julie Berthollet Brahms, Khachaturian, Jenkins, Gluck, Schubert, Sarasate et al Camille Berthollet (violin), Julie Berthollet (cello), Guillaume Vincent (piano), Thomas Dutronc (guitar), Monte Carlo PO/Julien Masmondet *Warner Classics 9029593810*



Two talented young musicians, though their performances are short in fun and spontaneity. Dynamics and rhythms could be tighter, and it needs more confidence. (OC) ★★

Dedications Works by Kreisler, Faure, Ysaÿe, Chausson, Saint-Saëns Philippens (violin), Quentin (piano) *Channel Classics CCS 38516*



Rosanne Philippens's brilliantly focused, expressive sound is coupled with an inspired programme of music by and for virtuoso violinists of the Romantic period. An absolute joy from start to finish. (EC) ★★★★★

Historia Sancti Olavi Gregorian Chant in Norway Consortium Vocale Oslo, Graces and Voices *Lawo LWC1106*



Immaculately sung and atmospherically recorded, this two-disc set of pure chant includes, for those with a historical bent, fascinating sleeve notes. (JP) ★★★★★

La Famille Forqueray A & J-B Forqueray, Couperin & Duphy Taylor (harpsichord) *Alpha ALPHA 247*



Justin Taylor's decent performance and interesting booklet celebrate music by the Forquerays, a dynasty of musicians employed in the courts of 17th-century France. (EC) ★★

Music for a Prussian Salon Works by Tausch, Stamitz, Crusell, etc Boxwood & Brass *Resonus RES 10177*



Franz Tausch was a virtuoso in the Prussian court with a Europe-wide reputation, who probably first inspired Mozart's love for the clarinet. Charming if slight chamber music for wind instruments. (EC) ★★

My Hero Works by Massenet, Bizet, Balfe, Bellini, Verdi et al Greta Bradman (soprano); ECO/Richard Bonyne *Decca 481 1894*



With what conductor Richard Bonyne calls 'true old-fashioned bel canto sound', Greta Bradman delivers this disc of greatest hits with aplomb. Her flamboyant rendition of Rossini's 'Una voce poco fa' is a highlight. (EC) ★★

Sing Willow: Shakespeare Songs Vaughan Williams, MacMillan, Leighton, Chilcott, Rutter et al Les Sirènes/Andrew Nunn

Albion Records ALBCD 030



Les Sirènes, Choir of the Year in 2012, performs a well-varied programme for upper voices with full-bodied, vibrant sound, though words are sometimes obscured by vibrato. (EC) ★★

Harp and clarinet transcriptions Schubert, R & C Schumann Grammenos (clarinet), Llenaerts (harp) *Warner Classics 9029591322*



Familiar works, though with piano replaced by harp and the clarinet taking on, in turns, the role of oboe, voice and arpeggione. Generally, the transcriptions work well. (JP) ★★
Reviewers: Oliver Condy (OC), Elinor Cooper (EC), Rebecca Franks (RF), Jeremy Pound (JP)

The month in box-sets



YOUNG RUSSIAN STAR: pianist Evgeny Kissin at the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, 1991

Highways and by-ways

Our reissue round-up unites Italian rarities with Kissin

Consisting of 20 CDs and 15 composers in all, the **20th-century Italian Piano**

Music box set from Brilliant Classics (9470) is a glorious treasure trove. While composers such as Respighi, Busoni and Rota are familiar, the likes of Caetani (see also review, left) and Sinigaglia are less so. There's a lot to explore here and, even if not all of it will suit all tastes, simply dipping in and trying is a joy.



Kissin's 1993 recital of Chopin at Carnegie Hall is a gem

Staying with the piano, a 25-disc set of the complete RCA and Sony Classical albums (Sony 88875127202) by **Evgeny Kissin** should keep most listeners happy for hours. Cover images ranging from pouty teenager of the late-1980s to the sophisticated gent of the mid-2000s tell us that nearly 20 years of the brilliant Russian are covered here, in both studio and live recordings. The 1993 Chopin recital at Carnegie Hall is a particular gem.

Daniel Barenboim, meanwhile, both plays and conducts on Warner's 35-disc **Beethoven Barenboim** set (0190295922580). As well as all 32 sonatas and the *Diabelli Variations*, Barenboim

the pianist is joined in chamber music by Jacqueline du Pré in the cello sonatas and Pinchas Zukerman in the violin sonatas. Performances with the

baton include the nine symphonies with the Berlin Staatskapelle and Beethoven's only opera, *Fidelio*.

Recorded over the last three years, Naxos's **Villa-Lobos: Complete Guitar Manuscripts** (8.503289)

gives a fascinating insight into the Brazilian composer's music for the instrument. The best-known work in the set is the 1955 Concerto, but the Italian virtuoso Andrea Bissoli also introduces us to rarities aplenty.

Those wanting to investigate last issue's composer of the month **Heinrich Schütz**, meanwhile, might want to consider the first installment of the Dresdner Kammerchor's complete works series (*Carus 83.041*). Choral works featured in this 11-disc set include the exquisite Italian madrigals, works heavily influenced by the early-Baroque composer's time spent in Venice.

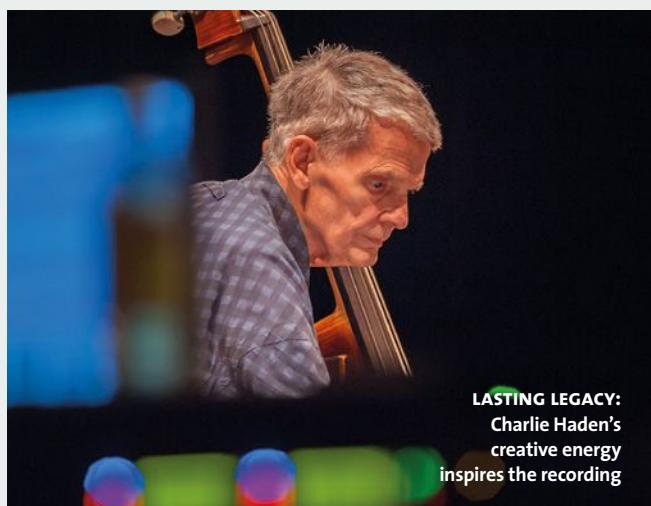
JAZZ

Pianist *Keith Jarrett's* epic 1996 Italian concerts; *Alison Rayner's* uplifting quintet; plus pianist *Mike Westbrook* draws from disparate sources

BBC MUSIC JAZZ CHOICE

Tribute to a master

Garry Booth enjoys the new Liberation Music Orchestra disc, celebrating Charlie Haden



LASTING LEGACY:
Charlie Haden's
creative energy
inspires the recording



LIBERATION MUSIC ORCHESTRA

Time/Life (Song for the Whales and Other Beings)

Charlie Haden, Steve Swallow (bass), Carla Bley (piano), Chris Cheek, Tony Malaby, Loren Stillman (sax) et al
Impulse/Decca 479 8480 54 mins

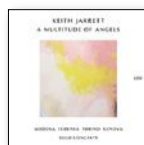
Double-bassist Charlie Haden founded the Liberation Music Orchestra (LMO) in 1969, when idealism seemed to be on its way out. Over the next 40-plus years his group gained legendary status for turbulent live shows that celebrated political consciousness

and social justice. But in all that time they only made four albums, including one live recording, so this valedictory disc is especially welcome. With just two numbers in the can at the time of Haden's death in July 2014, long-time LMO arranger Carla Bley stepped up to pen startling new arrangements for three of her own compositions.

Recorded the day after Haden's memorial service in New York, the album's a magnificent requiem that captures the energy and passion the bassist inspired. From the urbane unfurling of Miles Davis's 'Blue In Green' through the brooding 'Silent Spring' to the howling *arco* bass abstraction of 'Song For The Whales', Haden's message seems more important today than ever.

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
RECORDING ★★★★★

Hear an excerpt of this recording at www.classical-music.com



KEITH JARRETT

A Multitude of Angels

Keith Jarrett (piano)
ECM 2500-03 300 mins (4 CDs)

Keith Jarrett has made around 30 solo recordings for ECM since 1971, but a new release from the 71-year-old *enfant terrible* of modern jazz still makes people sit up. This four-CD box set is more important than most because it covers the last concerts of long form improvisation Jarrett ever played with no breaks within each set. Succumbing to chronic fatigue syndrome, he didn't perform again in public for another two years after these 1996 dates. Jarrett himself describes the concerts as the pinnacle of his career. The pieces are epic: half hour-long movements of intense music that's made in the moment.

It's a kind of jazz performance that transcends jazz, with the pianist subconsciously drawing on influences as spiritually diverse as Irish and African music, Ives and Bach. Jarrett's wordless vocalisations are frequently an annoying distraction, but it's impossible not to be knocked out by the sheer creative firepower of the artist. *Garry Booth*

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
RECORDING ★★★★★



ALISON RAYNER QUINTET

A Magic Life

Alison Rayner (bass), Buster Birch (drums), Deidre Cartwright (guitar), Diane McLoughlin (sax), Steve Lodder (piano)

Blow the Fuse Records BTF1613CD 50 mins

There are many ways to make an uplifting jazz album, but one that manages to convey its deeply personal

sources of inspiration, while at the same time welcoming the listener into the music, is surely one of the most satisfying. So it is with this second outing for bass player Alison Rayner's commendable quintet, offering a set of pieces inspired by real-world ideas, people and situations but infused with the kind of heady imagination that transforms their resonances into a series of vivacious musical adventures.

These eight original tunes reference all manner of sources without any sense of contrivance, traversing Ellingtonian swing, homespun pastoralism, jittery quasi-Bach, infectious grooves and many other territories with a natural ease, but they also spring enough good-natured surprises on the listener to dismiss any notion of complacency. The recorded sound is expertly shaped around both the group and the excellent solos. (See blowthefuse.com for upcoming UK tour dates.) *Roger Thomas*

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
RECORDING ★★★★★



MIKE WESTBROOK

Paris

Mike Westbrook (piano)
ASC Records Ascdd166 67 mins

Somewhat like his idol Duke Ellington, Westbrook's work with large ensembles has been so successful (critically and artistically if not commercially) that his piano playing gets less attention than it deserves. His last album and tour was with the 21-piece Uncommon Orchestra. Shortly after that daunting logistical enterprise ended he visited the other end of the spectrum with this solo recording.

There's a predominantly melancholic, or at least contemplative, cast to the set, which intersperses original pieces by Westbrook and his wife and artistic partner Kate with tunes by Ellington, Billy Strayhorn, Lennon-McCartney, Bessie Smith and two familiar gems rendered fresh from the Great American Songbook. Some are so thoroughly yet sensitively transformed that you'd hardly guess they weren't devised there and then specifically for this cohesive recital.

Westbrook's playing is intimate, restrained, reflective, introspective and deceptively simple, moulding 20 disparate sources into a beautiful and beguiling whole. *Barry Witherden*

PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
RECORDING ★★★★★



FIRST LADY OF SONG:
Ella Fitzgerald appealed
to a wide jazz audience

No. 201 ELLA FITZGERALD II

Geoffrey Smith, presenter of *Geoffrey Smith's Jazz*, on a singer's mastery of the Great American Songbook



One of the notable anniversaries of 2017 is bound to be the 100th birthday of Ella Fitzgerald, the shy,

awkward street waif who became the global queen of jazz and pop. Her first *Jazz Starter* (No. 22, Feb 2003) surveyed the brilliant trajectory of her career, from teenage stardom in the swing era to international celebrity in the 1950s and after, combining scat-singing virtuosity with a skill for making the lyrics of a song gleam like new, and delivering both with a spontaneous, unaffected joy which captured every audience.

Hardcore jazz fans preferred Fitzgerald's exuberant side, throwing caution to the wind like the eminent horn players who regarded her as a formidable equal. But just as distinctive was her way with the Great American Songbook, that canon of standards created by the master tunesmiths of Broadway and Hollywood, whom Fitzgerald honoured in a series of albums. Starting in 1956 with the Cole Porter Songbook, she paid individual homage to the creative pantheon comprising the likes of the Gershwins, Irving Berlin, Jerome Kern and Duke Ellington, among others.

A particular favourite among her Songbooks is that devoted to Rodgers and Hart. Which may be no surprise, since Richard Rodgers's melodies have always appealed to jazz musicians and Lorenz Hart's lyrics are in a class by themselves – literate, witty, acerbic, poignant. Fitzgerald invites us to share her pleasure and admiration at their achievement, showing why these standards are evergreens. Such classics as 'The Lady is a Tramp', 'My Funny Valentine', 'Little Girl Blue' become a captivating sequence of scenes and portraits, brought to life by her honesty, assurance and insight, her consummate phrasing and poise.

Although the orchestral arrangements are not especially memorable, they feature contributions from top-flight jazz musicians, and the programme alternates ballads with up-tempo swing. But in every mood, Fitzgerald is in her element, and this Songbook stands as a shared monument to the art of the singer and the song.

CD CHOICE

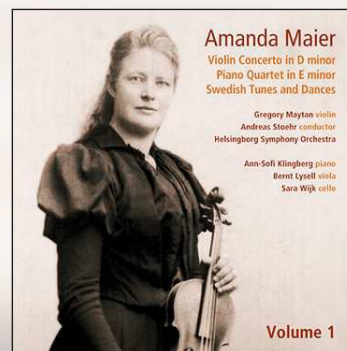


Ella Fitzgerald
*sings the Rodgers
& Hart Song Book*
Essential Jazz
Classics EJC 55641

New Hot CDs!

Amanda Maier | Volume 1 (dBCD174)

Violin Concerto, Piano Quartet, etc.. | Gregory Maytan, violin



PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
RECORDING ★★★★★

BBC Music Magazine
Review in this issue!

"I'm really happy to have been allowed to discover this music."
/ BBC Radio 3, Record Review

★★★★★+

"What a CD!" / HiFi & Musik

Howard Shelley | Aubade (dBCD177)

Västerås Sinfonietta | Works by Gabriel Fauré & Francis Poulenc



PERFORMANCE ★★★★★
RECORDING ★★★★★

BBC Music Magazine, Dec 2016

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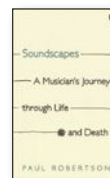


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BOOKS

Two glimpses of the afterlife – the strange but true story of how a séance prompted Hungarian violinist Jelly d'Arányi to rediscover Schumann's Violin Concerto; and the life-after-death experience of Paul Robertson



SOUNDSCAPES:
A Musician's Journey through Life and Death

Paul Robertson

Faber & Faber ISBN 978-0-571-33188-8
272pp (hb) £15.99 rrp

'I felt myself die,' recalls Paul Robertson, sometime leader of the Medici Quartet and a man intrigued by the neurological, scientific and ethical basis of music. 'Beautifully, ecstatically, transcendently. I saw eternity and shed the whole of myself joyfully in order to become unified with it'. In the event the ruptured aorta didn't kill him. Rather, the intense visions that accompanied a prolonged period of coma provided a wellspring of fertile material, which informs this book confronting the essence of music and what it is to be a musician. Crucially, that operating table epiphany surely mirrors, with unassailable eloquence, most people's response to great music communicating at its most elevated.

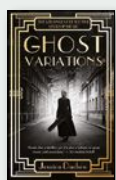
While convalescing, Robertson received the score of John Tavener's *Towards Silence* for four string quartets and temple bowl. 'Like consciousness itself,' he writes, 'its musical truth revealed itself by a process of "stilling" and simplification, like a glass of liquid becoming more translucent as it settles'. The image parallels Robertson's life – though there are plenty of no-holds-barred observations to engage those disinclined to engage with the book's spiritual thrust. Neville Marriner, for example, is described as a 'moderately effective fiddle player migrating into becoming an internationally renowned conductor'. Conductors, moreover, are 'baton-wielding monsters', though there's a certain irony given his hypersensitivity to the balance of power within his own quartet, compounded by a repeated need to 'cajole them into acquiescence'. Self-knowledge and self-regard entwine. Anecdotal serendipities sing.

Soundscapes isn't just a book for violinists, quartet players or those fascinated by the interface between mind and music. Its provocative honesty and gossipy brio lend much wider currency to an enhanced memoir that now, eight years after his body's life-changing rebellion, is also a timely memorial following Robertson's all-too-early death last summer. *Paul Riley* ★★

BBC MUSIC BOOKS CHOICE

Haunted by the past

Jessica Duchen draws some uncomfortable parallels, says *Kate Wakeling*



GHOST VARIATIONS

Jessica Duchen

Unbound ISBN 9778-1-78352-982-7 306pp

Available as an e-book from
unbound.com and amazon.co.uk

A ouija board, a long-lost manuscript, a free-spirited heroine and a continent in the grip of political upheaval: Jessica Duchen's gripping new novel, *Ghost Variations*, explores a truly intriguing episode in musicological history. For many years, Schumann's Violin Concerto lay gathering dust in the Prussian State Library. Completed in 1853 when

Duchen unpicks the gender politics of the arts with fierce aplomb

Schumann's health was already failing, the concerto was deemed unworthy of the composer's name by its dedicatee, Joseph Joachim, so was omitted from Schumann's Complete Edition and thence all but vanished from the world. *Ghost Variations* narrates the true story (give or take one's belief in spirit voices beyond the grave) of Jelly d'Arányi, the Hungarian violinist and great-niece of Joachim, who claimed she was contacted by Robert Schumann at a séance in 1938. Schumann allegedly implored the violinist to seek out the manuscript (which d'Arányi purportedly knew nothing of) and



BRAVE AND GUILTESS: Jelly d'Arányi triumphed in a male-dominated world

perform the work. The concerto was duly retrieved but the question of who should deliver its premiere was hotly disputed.

Neatly subtitled 'The Strangest Detective Story in Music', the novel spins a gripping yarn but also draws haunting and all-too-potent parallels between contemporary society and 1930s Britain. Duchen skilfully charts the poisonous rise of the far right and a deepening mistrust of 'foreigners', while also unpicking the thorny gender politics of the performing arts with fierce

aplomb. I would have welcomed an account that embraced the ambiguity of this extraordinary episode, perhaps exploring the possibility that d'Arányi may well have made the whole thing up (to my mind surely an equally if not more enthralling story?). But the warmth that Duchen brings to her characterisation of d'Arányi as a brave yet guileless female musician boldly taking on the male establishment makes for a stirring read, and propels the narrative to its moving and uplifting close. ★★

AUDIO

Our audio expert *Michael Brook* takes a look at the best new audio and video equipment to help you get the most out of recorded classical music

MUSIC CHOICE

PORTABLE HI-FI SPEAKER

DALI KATCH £329

DALI is known for its high-end, monolithic hi-fi speakers, but over the past couple of years it's begun to redefine its output, making it more in keeping with the way millions of us listen to music these days. The KUBIK FREE wireless player and KUBIK ONE soundbar are two examples of DALI's new direction.

It was pretty clear from the moment it was announced that the DALI KATCH hi-fi speaker was going to be something special. From the aluminium chassis to the stunning, slimline design it certainly looks good, but the key question, given its compact size, is whether it can hold a candle to DALI's more familiar products in terms of sonic performance?

The short answer is that it does. The KATCH is one of those products that will have you searching under the table for a phantom subwoofer, because of the power of its output. Its sound is as pristine as any portable speaker I've ever heard, with a crisp treble and a powerful low end – its sublime frequency separation leaves all others in the shade. The KATCH isn't just a powerful, home speaker: with 24 hours of battery life, you can carry it around with you all day long without any problems, when you're out and about. It's also available in three stylish colours – 'green moss', 'cloud grey' (pink) and 'dark shadow' (blue).

Once you've paired it with a suitable wireless device you're ready to go. The Bluetooth connectivity is a one-

button breeze to set up and it's just as easy to use the more traditional 3.5mm jack socket.

As portable speakers go, I've not seen better yet. Yes it has a 'premium' price point, but there's nothing out there to touch it. dali-speakers.com/uk ★★★★★



AUDIO ARTISTRY:
setting up the DALI KATCH
hi-fi speaker is simple



DAB & CD PLAYER

SonoroCD 2 £349,

German manufacturer Sonoro is little known in the UK, but it's starting to make a name for itself for high quality hi-fi kit. The compact CD 2 system (above) has been designed specifically for the bedroom and, alongside its music-playing abilities – which include CD playback, FM and DAB and Bluetooth streaming – it

comes pre-loaded with a variety of relaxation settings. By combining it with the optional SonoroLIGHT dimmer control, for £39 (which plugs into a mains socket) the CD 2 will even wake you gradually from your slumber with a simulated sunrise.

Sonoro's 360-degree speaker technology claims to distribute sound evenly around the room, in contrast to the 'sweet spot' delivered by traditional speakers. While it's not perfect, there's definitely a feeling of freedom, knowing you're not wedded to one spot to hear the best playback.

The build quality is solid and the CD 2 is available in a range of ten colours. It's an unusual product, for sure, but if you're looking for a capable bedroom music system, then look no further. sonoro.co.uk ★★★★★

APPLE LIGHTNING HEADPHONES Philips Fidelio M2L £199.99

Apple's Lightning Connector is slowly making an impact on the headphones market. Put simply, if you've bought the new iPhone 7, you no longer have the luxury of a 3.5mm headphone jack, so you'll either need to use an adaptor (which currently comes free with the iPhone) or opt to buy a set of Lightning-equipped headphones.

Philips is the latest brand to produce a specific model variant for Lightning users in its M2L (above) and, mercifully, given their in-built limitations, they



perform very well. Tuned to deliver sound at the lower end of the spectrum, the M2Ls still manage to make a good stab at the rest of the frequency range without the low-end being too consuming.

Sadly, since you'll more often than not be using these headphones on the move, there's no in-line remote to adjust volume or take calls, which is an oversight. But, based on pure performance, the M2Ls deliver the goods. philips.co.uk ★★★★★

HIGH-PERFORMANCE TURNTABLE Pro-Ject Essential III £239

The Essential III is an update on the excellent Essential II turntable and delivers a number of improvements thanks to the new Acryl-IT E turntable platter and Ortofon OM10 cartridge. The Essential range has always contained well-built models and the III continues that trend. Given the price tag, its level of craftsmanship is surprisingly high-end. In terms of sound, the Pro-Ject's playback has an impressive level of refinement and scale – things are never allowed to get messy, even at high volume. And it demonstrates real composure in the way the £330 Audio Technica LP5 does, for example. Given the price differential – albeit with the caveat that the LP5 is direct drive while the Essential is belt driven – the Pro-Ject Essential III is now my favourite budget turntable.

The manufacturer says it has added around £100-worth of improvements to the Essential III over its predecessor, but only £30 to the price tag. That's surely music to anyone's ears...

henleydesigns.co.uk
★★★★★



LIVE CHOICE

20 UNMISSABLE EVENTS FOR JANUARY 2017

*BBC Music Magazine's choice of the UK's best January concerts and operas, plus a guide to Handel's *Semele**

 For detailed concert listings visit www.classical-music.com/whats-on

1 NATIONAL YOUTH ORCHESTRA

Royal Concert Hall, Nottingham, 5 Jan

Tel: +44 (0)115 989 5555

Web: www.nyo.org.uk

The National Youth Orchestra was literally out of this world last summer as it navigated a space-themed concert, including Holst's *The Planets*. Composed in memory of the ill-fated Soviet cosmonaut, Brett Dean's *Komarov's Fall* was conceived in 2006 as an 'asteroid' to Holst's *The Planets*. This National Youth Orchestra January tour also gives lift-off to Szymanowski's Symphony No. 4 and Rachmaninov's Symphony No. 2. John Wilson conducts.

2 CELLO UNWRAPPED

Kings Place, London, 7 & 11 Jan

Tel: +44 (0)20 7520 1490

Web: www.kingsplace.co.uk

It tells you all you need to know about the ambition and scope of Kings Place's year-long 'Cello Unwrapped' odyssey that the first two evenings showcase Alban Gerhardt (above, right) and Christophe Coin. Gerhardt teases out Tchaikovsky's *Rococo Variations* with the Aurora Orchestra, while Coin sets his sights on solo Bach.

3 BBC PHILHARMONIC

Bridgewater Hall, Manchester, 13 Jan

Tel: +44 (0)161 907 9000

Web: www.bridgewater-hall.co.uk

Prefaced by a Nottingham performance of Shostakovich's Eighth Symphony, conductor Nicholas Collon repeats the work in Manchester after eye-catching Ravel. Jean-Efflam Bavouzet is the soloist in Ravel's Piano Concerto for the Left Hand, and orchestrations of three of the piano *Miroirs* include the premiere of Colin Matthews's re-imagining of *La vallée des cloches*.

4 BENJAMIN'S WRITTEN ON SKIN

Royal Opera House, London, 13-30 Jan

Tel: +44 (0)20 7304 4000

Web: www.roh.org.uk

Based on a 12th-century Occitan ballad, George Benjamin's first full-length opera triumphed at its premiere in 2012. Benjamin himself conducts this revival of Katie Mitchell's production first seen in London the following year. All but two of the performances feature Canadian soprano Barbara Hannigan as the rebellious Agnès, with baritone Christopher Purves reprising the role of The Protector.

SKIN TONES:
George Benjamin conducts the revival of his 2012 opera



PLAYING IT COOL:
cellist Alban Gerhardt caters for audiences great and small (Choice 2)

5 BBC SCOTTISH SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

City Halls, Glasgow, 14 Jan

Tel: +44 (0)141 353 8000

Web: www.glasgowconcerthalls.com

With Christmas scarcely over, Easter comes early to the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra which enlists conductor Martyn Brabbins, the electronics of Sound Intermedia and the BBC Singers for a semi-staged account of Harrison Birtwistle's *The Last Supper*, an exploration of the events surrounding Good Friday meshing in elements of then and now. Heading the cast as Christ is baritone Roderick Williams.

6 SIMON RATTLE

Barbican, London, 14, 15 & 19 Jan

Tel: +44 (0)20 7638 8891

Web: www.barbican.org.uk

Simon Rattle doesn't take up the music directorship of the London Symphony Orchestra until September but hits the ground running at the start of the year with two performances (semi-staged by Peter Sellars) of Ligeti's riotous opera *Le grand macabre*. He follows it (on 19 Jan) with the world premiere of Mark-Anthony Turnage's *Remembering 'In Memoriam Evan Scofield'*, paired with Mahler's mighty Symphony No. 6.



7 WYE VALLEY CHAMBER FESTIVAL

Monmouth and surroundings, 14-22 Jan

Tel: +44 (0)7813 612033

Web: www.wyevalleyfestival.com

The Eusebius Quartet adds string quartet 'last words' by Haydn, Bartók and Beethoven to a festival directed by pianists Simon Crawford-Phillips and Daniel Tong, including viola player Lawrence Power and cellist Richard Lester. This year's 'Discovery Day' concentrates on 'First Steps', exploring debut trios and quartets by Mendelssohn, Dvořák, Weber and Bartók.

8 ROYAL LIVERPOOL PHILHARMONIC

Philharmonic Hall, Liverpool, 19 Jan

Tel: +44 (0)151 709 3789

Web: www.liverpoolphil.com

A highlight of Vasily Petrenko's Shostakovich cycle with the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic on Naxos, Shostakovich's Symphony No. 12 *The Year 1917* ends a highly charged programme that opens with Emily Howard's *Torus*, written for the orchestra's 175th anniversary and premiered at last year's Proms. In between, pianist Teo Gheorghiu tackles Schubert's *Wanderer Fantasy* as orchestrated by Liszt.

9 CITY OF LONDON SINFONIA

Civic Theatre, Chelmsford, 20 Jan

Tel: +44 (0)1245 606505

Web: www.cityoflondonsinfonia.co.uk

In preparation for two nights at London's Wilton's Music Hall where Piazzolla meets 'Burns Night Ceilidh', the City of London Sinfonia hones its fiddling skills in the Essex capital. The programme, beginning and ending with Vivaldi, marries Irish and Scottish reels with Percy Grainger, and folk music from the Appalachians with Copland and Locatelli. Alexandra Wood's violin and Henry Webster's folk fiddle lock horns.

10 DUNEDIN CONSORT

St Machar's Cathedral, Aberdeen, 21 Jan

Tel: +44 (0)131 516 3718

Web: www.dunedin-consort.org.uk

After a Christmas dominated by Handel's *Messiah*, John Butt's Dunedin Consort returns to the Bachian fold for a concert contrasting sacred and secular Leipzig works. Two seasonal cantatas, Nos 81 & 111, are flanked by suites that were probably assembled for the city's Collegium Musicum: the flute-showcasing BWV 1067 and its C major cousin, BWV 1066.

11 BBC NATIONAL ORCHESTRA OF WALES

Brangwyn Hall, Swansea, 21 Jan

Tel: 0800 052 1812 (UK only)

Web: www.bbc.co.uk/bbcnow

Principal conductor Thomas Søndergård and the BBC National Orchestra of Wales brought Mahler's First Symphony to Swansea back in June, and they return with No. 6, the *Tragic*, (the 'only sixth, despite the Pastoral' Berg told Webern). Assuaging its hammer blows of fate, the first half is entrusted to the BBC National Chorus of Wales under Adrian Partington for a clutch of Bruckner motets including *Locus iste*.

12 JOHN ADIE MEMORIAL CONCERT

Exeter Cathedral, Devon, 21 Jan

Tel: +44 (0)20 7935 2141

Web: www.wigmore-hall.org.uk

Following the fire that destroyed Exeter's historic Royal Clarence Hotel, a postponed concert at the nearby Cathedral in memory of John Adie, a founder of the Two Moors Festival, has been successfully rescheduled. The Orchestra of The Swan performs Mozart concertos, with violinist Alina Ibragimova and clarinetist Jordan Black as soloists.

13 ST PETERSBURG PHILHARMONIC

Sage, Gateshead, 21 Jan

Tel: +44 (0)191 443 4661

Web: www.sagegateshead.com

Russian music is much in evidence as the country's oldest orchestra tours the UK in the company of its principal conductor of nearly three decades, Yuri Temirkanov. Excerpts from Prokofiev's *Romeo and Juliet* and a suite from Ravel's *Daphnis et Chloé* share a programme with Rachmaninov's *Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini*. Nikolai Lugansky is the piano soloist.

14 BEETHOVEN'S FIDELIO

Southbank Centre, London, 21 Jan

Tel: +44 (0)844 875 0073

Web: www.southbankcentre.co.uk

'Being human in the 21st century' is the subtitle of the Southbank Centre's 'Belief and Beyond Belief' festival which unfolds over the next 12 months. The London Philharmonic Orchestra takes the long view with a curtain-raising performance of *Fidelio*, Beethoven's operatic hymn to love and liberty. It's conducted by Vladimir Jurowski with soprano Anja Kampe as the intrepid Leonora.

15 MARTHA ARGERICH

Sheldonian Theatre, Oxford, 21 Jan

Tel: +44 (0)1865 305305

Web: www.oxfordphil.com

There are two chances to catch the indomitable Martha Argerich in Prokofiev's Piano Concerto No. 3 this month. The second is with the St Petersburg Philharmonic at the Royal Festival Hall (on 29 Jan), but first ►

QUICK GUIDE TO...

SEMELE
George Frideric Handel

FROM THE HEAVENS:
Covent Garden's
production of *Semele*

Five key facts about a work being performed this month (Choice 18)

- *Semele* is a musical drama in three parts that Handel composed in 'the manner of an oratorio'. It was premiered on 10 February 1744 at Covent Garden. Handel adapted a libretto by William Congreve, from 1705, which had been used in an opera by English composer John Eccles. The story is from Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and concerns Semele, the daughter of the Theban King, and her adulterous affair with Jupiter.

- It took Handel just over a month to write the work. In the legend Semele, the daughter of Cadmus, has the affections of the god Jupiter – who sends an eagle to fetch her. But Jupiter's wife Juno tricks Semele into getting her husband to reveal himself in his immortal form – as the bringer of thunder – which kills her. Apollo then drops in to announce that Bacchus, the god of wine, will rise from Semele's ashes.

- The work contains the famous tenor aria 'Where'er you walk' in Act II, as Jupiter attempts to distract Semele from wanting to become immortal by singing her a beautiful love song. It was originally sung by tenor John Beard, who also sang the lead in Handel's *Saul*. The opera's choruses are sung by participants in the drama. This is particularly dramatic after Semele's death, as the chorus soars with an outpouring of grief: 'O terror! And astonishment'.

- *Semele* was a surprise to London audiences who weren't expecting a secular story in the season of Lent. The cast at the premiere included French soprano Elisabeth Duparc 'La Francesina' in the title role.

- Interest in the work was rekindled in the early 20th century, leading to a run at Sadler's Wells. In 1982 Charles Mackerras raised the baton for *Semele*'s return to Covent Garden, 238 years after its premiere.



THE ONLY WAY IS ESSEX:
Christian Ihle Hadland heads
east for Saffron Hall's Big
Chamber Weekend (Choice 16)

she joins the Oxford Philharmonic under Marios Papadopoulos – who follow it with the premiere of Giulia Monducci's *Versus* and Stravinsky's *The Firebird*.

16 BIG CHAMBER WEEKEND

Saffron Hall, Saffron Walden, Essex, 21 & 22 Jan

Tel: 0845 548 7650 (UK only)

Web: www.saffronhall.com

Norwegian pianist Christian Ihle Hadland (above) convenes an intimate cluster of friends, including cellist Adrian Brendel, for a Radio 3 Big Chamber Weekend. The repertoire ranges from trios by Sibelius, Brahms and Grieg, to viola sonatas by Shostakovich and Rebecca Clarke. The weekend culminates with Dvořák's feisty E flat Piano Quartet, Op. 87.

17 PIERRE-LAURENT AIMARD & TAMARA STEFANOVICH

St John's Smith Square, London, 24 Jan

Tel: +44 (0)20 7222 1061

Web: www.sjss.org.uk

The Southbank Centre's 'Belief and Beyond Belief' festival spreads its wings to SW1 for a two-piano concert that unites Aimard and Stefanovich in Messiaen's great wartime affirmation of faith and beatific fervour, the *Visions de L'Amen*. They preface it with another protean duo: Brahms's F minor Piano Quintet in its earlier Sonata incarnation.

18 HANDEL'S SEMELE

Symphony Hall,

Birmingham, 25 Jan

Tel: +44 (0)121 780 3333

Web: www.thsh.co.uk

End of term opera in concert has become something of a City of Birmingham

Symphony Orchestra calling card and Mozart's *Idomeneo* beckons in June. But in a pre-emptive strike, Richard Egarr forswears the period instruments of his Academy of Ancient Music to conduct Handel's 1744 'musical drama' *Semele* (see box, left). Based on Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, it stars soprano Mhairi Lawson in the title role with tenor Andrew Tortise as the two-timing Jupiter. Mezzo Barbara Kozelj is Ino, Semele's sister.

19 THOMAS ADÈS'S POWDER HER FACE

Lyric Theatre, Belfast, 27-29 Jan

Tel: +44 (0)28 9038 1081

Web: www.niopera.com

Soon to be transferred to the Royal Opera House, artistic director Oliver Mears leaves Opera Northern Ireland in good heart with two radically different Irish premieres this season. Handel's *Radamisto* is scheduled for May, after Antony McDonald directs Thomas Adès's powerfully observed 1995 operatic debut *Powder her Face*, this month, with soprano Giselle Allen as the scandal-hit Duchess of Argyll. Nicholas Chalmers conducts.

20 THE CLERKS

University Department of Music, Palace Green, Durham, 31 Jan

Tel: +44 (0)191 3343140

Web: www.dur.ac.uk/musicon.concerts

'The Ascent of Song: the first million years' is the ambitious title of The Clerks's vocal time-travelling programme that sets de Wert and Ockeghem alongside the music of the Ba'Aka tribes of the Congo, and medieval chant cheek by jowl with Eastern European folk music. The musical ascent is completed with something bang up-to-date: a new work by English composer Christopher Fox.



music

MAGAZINE



HEAR FROM THE TEAM



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RADIO & TV LISTINGS

Each issue we provide full listings for BBC Radio 3 introduced by the station's controller Alan Davey, plus highlights of classical music programmes on television



DOCTOR'S ORDERS:
In Berg's *Wozzeck*, baritone Simon Keenlyside (left) plays the hapless protagonist alongside bass John Tomlinson



CONTROLLER'S CHOICE



Alan Davey, the controller of Radio 3, picks out three great moments to tune into in January

BREAKING FREE

During 2017, Radio 3 is looking at revolutionary musical movements, beginning this month with the Second Viennese School. Its founder, Arnold Schoenberg – who upturned established concepts of tonality with his 12-tone technique – is the subject of *Composer of the Week* and a 12-part series where Tom Service explores his works in depth. While *Sound of Cinema* looks at Hollywood's use of Schoenberg's

atonal music, the work of the composer's followers – including Webern and Berg – is also spotlighted. *Afternoon on 3* features Keith Warner's Royal Opera House production of Berg's *Wozzeck* (5 Jan) with baritone Simon Keenlyside (above) as the tormented lead. *Breaking Free – Second Viennese School*; 1-7 January

BIG CHAMBER WEEKEND

Since it opened in 2013, Saffron Hall has claimed its rightful place as a major performance venue thanks to its excellent acoustic. This month, Radio 3 is heading out to Essex concert hall for a Big Chamber Weekend that will be broadcast over the subsequent week of *Lunchtime Concerts* (24-27 Jan). Norwegian pianist Christian Ihle Hadland assembles a group of top-flight chamber musicians, including cellist Adrian

Brendel and violinist Boris Brovtsyn, for a programme that includes trios by Sibelius, Brahms and Grieg alongside a performance by violist Lars Anders Tomter of Rebecca Clarke's evocative Sonata for Viola and Piano. *Lunchtime Concert*; 24-27 January, 1pm

SHOSTAKOVICH'S EIGHTH

Radio 3 comes live from The Lighthouse in Poole, broadcasting a concert of Russian repertoire from the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra under Kirill Karabits. On the programme is Shostakovich's bleak Eighth Symphony and Prokofiev's folk-influenced Second Violin Concerto, with Valeriy Sokolov as soloist. This concert is part of a conference run by the Association of British Orchestras, the organisation that champions the interests of the UK's professional ensembles. *Radio 3 in Concert*; 25 January, 7.30pm

JANUARY'S RADIO 3 LISTINGS

BBC
RADIO

90 – 93FM

Schedules may be subject to alteration; for up-to-date listings see Radio Times

1 SUNDAY



CHOICE

BREAKING FREE – SECOND VIENNESE SCHOOL

Radio 3 opens the New Year with a week of programmes, 1-7 January, looking at the revolutionary output of the Second Viennese School

7-9am Breakfast

9am-10.15am Sunday

Morning, featuring Berg's 1921 work *Wein, Weib und Gesang*

10.15-12noon New Year's

Day Concert live from Vienna.

(The concert is also being televised on BBC Two, see box, p93)

12 noon-1pm Private Passions

1-2pm Lunchtime Concert

(rpt, from Wigmore Hall)

2-3pm The Early Music Show

Viennese Whirls – Lucie Skeaping charts the early musical history of the Austrian capital

3-4pm Choral Evensong

Rodolfus Choir at St Gabriel's Church, Pimlico (rpt)

4-5pm The Choir, with works by

Webern and Schoenberg, plus a choral arrangement of Berg's *Die Nachtigall*

5-5.30pm The Listening

Service Tom Service looks at how to listen to Webern, with special reference to his *Symphony, Op. 21*

5.30-6.45pm Words and Music

The Words of Yesterday

6.45-7.30pm Sunday Feature

Freud vs Music – Stephen Johnson explores Freud's enigmatic relationship with music

7.30-9pm BBC Proms 2016

Prom 74 (rpt) Verdi *Requiem*. Tamara Wilson (soprano), Alisa Kolosova (mezzo), Michael Fabiano (tenor), Morris Robinson (bass), BBC Proms Youth Choir, Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment/Marin Alsop

9-10.45pm Drama on 3

10.45-11pm The Schoenberg

Series (Part 1), presented by Tom Service

11pm-12.30am Early Music

Late Simon Heighes presents harpsichord works by Froberger, d'Anglebert and Clérambault in a concert given by Andreas Staier

2 MONDAY

6.30-9am Breakfast

9am-12 noon Essential

Classics, featuring Schoenberg String Quartets (Part 1) and The Schoenberg Series (Part 2), presented by Tom Service

12 noon-1pm Composer of

the Week Schoenberg

1-2pm Lunchtime Concert

from Wigmore Hall, London (tbc)

2-4.30pm Afternoon on 3

the world of the Second Viennese School

in five objects: (Part 1) Richard

Gerstl's *Laughing self-portrait*

4.30-5.45pm Words and Music

5.45-7pm New Generation

Artists Berg *Four Pieces for Clarinet and Piano, Op. 5*

7-9pm BBC Proms 2016 Prom 72

(rpt) Beethoven *Violin Concerto in D*, Reger *Variations and Fugue on a Theme by Mozart*, R Strauss

Till Eulenspiegels lustige Streiche. Nikolaj Znaider (violin), Staatskapelle Dresden/Christian Thielemann.

The Schoenberg Series (Part 3)

9-10.45pm Prom 73 (rpt) Handel *Zadok the Priest, My heart is inditing*, Muffat *Armonico tributo – Sonata No. 5 in G*, Handel *Let thy hand be strengthened*, JS Bach (arr. Stokowski) *Orchestral Suite No. 3 in D, BWV 1068 – Air*, Purcell (arr. Stokowski) *Dido and Aeneas – 'When I am laid in earth' (Dido's Lament)*, Handel *The King shall rejoice*. Academy of Ancient Music/Egarr

10.45-11pm The Essay Vienna

3 TUESDAY

6.30-9am Breakfast

9am-12 noon Essential

Classics, featuring Schoenberg String Quartets (Part 2) and The Schoenberg Series (Part 4)

12 noon-1pm Composer of

the Week Schoenberg

1-2pm Lunchtime Concert

2-4.30pm Afternoon on 3 the world of the Second Viennese School in five objects: (Part 2) Asteroids

4.30-5.45pm Words and Music

5.45-7pm New Generation

Artists Berg *Lytic Suite*

7-9pm BBC Proms 2017

Prom 59 (rpt) Beethoven *'Leonore' Overture No. 2, Piano Concerto No. 5 in E flat, Op. 73 ('Emperor')*, Beethoven *Symphony No. 7*. Andrés Schiff (piano), Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra/Blomstedt.

The Schoenberg Series (Part 5)

9-10.45pm Prom 65 (rpt)

Bartók *Three Village Scenes*, Boulez *Anthèmes 2*, Carter *Penthode*, Boulez *Cummings ist der Dichter*. BBC Singers, Ensemble Intercontemporain/Brönnimann

10.45-11pm The Essay

Vienna – Stephen Johnson on Schoenberg's *String Quartet No. 2*

4 WEDNESDAY

6.30-9am Breakfast

9am-12 noon Essential

Classics, featuring Schoenberg String Quartets (Part 3) and The Schoenberg Series (Part 6)

12 noon-1pm Composer of

the Week Schoenberg

1-2pm Lunchtime Concert

from Wigmore Hall, London. Janáček *Mládí*, Smetana *Der Fischer (Rybář)*,



CZECH AFFAIR: Christianne Stotijn sings Dvořák (5 January)

2-3.30pm Afternoon on 3

the world of the Second Viennese School in five objects: (Part 3) Schoenberg's Games

3.30-4.30pm Choral Evensong

from King's College, London. A service for Epiphany (rec. 15 Dec), including motets by Poulenc and Schoenberg

4.30-6pm In Tune, featuring

The Schoenberg Series (Part 7)

6-7pm Composer of the

Week Schoenberg (rpt)

7-9pm BBC Proms 2017 Prom 60

(rpt) JS Bach *Cantata No. 82 'Ich habe genug'*, BWV 82, Bruckner *Symphony No. 9*. Christian Gerhaher (bass-baritone), Gustav Mahler Jugendorchester/Philippe Jordan

9-10.45pm Prom 61 (rpt)

Kamasi Washington (saxophone), CBSO/Jules Buckley

10-10.45pm Free Thinking

10.45-11pm The Essay

5 THURSDAY

6.30-9am Breakfast

9am-12 noon Essential

Classics, featuring Schoenberg String Quartets (Part 4) and The Schoenberg Series (Part 8)

12 noon-1pm Composer of

the Week Schoenberg

1-2pm Lunchtime Concert

2-4.30pm Afternoon on 3 including a repeat of a Royal Opera House production of Berg's *Wozzeck*. Simon Keenlyside (Wozzeck), Karita Mattila (Marie) et al, Orchestra of the Royal Opera House/Mark Elder. The programme includes: the world of the Second Viennese School in five objects: (Part 4) Numbers 13 & 23

4.30-6.30pm In Tune, featuring

The Schoenberg Series (Part 9)

6.30-7.30pm Composer of

the Week Schoenberg (rpt)

7.30-10pm Radio 3 in Concert

from Wigmore Hall, London. Janáček *Mládí*, Smetana *Der Fischer (Rybář)*,

Dvořák *Love Songs, Op. 83* (arr. David Matthews), *Piano Quintet No. 2 in A, Op. 81*. Christianne Stotijn (mezzo-soprano), Nash Ensemble

10-10.45pm

Free Thinking Vienna special

10.45-11pm The Essay

Vienna – Sarah Walker explores Schoenberg's *Suite, Op. 25*

6 FRIDAY

6.30-9am Breakfast

9am-12 noon Essential

Classics, featuring Schoenberg String Quartets (Part 5) and The Schoenberg Series (Part 10)

12 noon-1pm Composer of

the Week Schoenberg

1-2pm Lunchtime Concert

2-4.30pm Afternoon on 3 the world of the Second Viennese School in five objects: (Part 5) (tbc)

4.30-6.30pm In Tune, featuring

The Schoenberg Series (Part 11)

6.30-7.30pm Composer of

the Week Schoenberg (rpt)

7.30-10pm Radio 3 in

Concert live from Symphony Hall, Birmingham. Brett Dean *Komarov's Fall*, Szymanowski *Symphony No. 4 'Sinfonia Concertante'*, Rachmaninov *Symphony No. 2, Op. 27*. Tamara Stefanovich (piano), National Orchestra of Great Britain/John Wilson

10-10.45pm The Verb

10.45-11pm The Essay

Vienna – Tom McKinney explores Webern's *5 Pieces, Op. 10*

7 SATURDAY

7-9am Breakfast

9am-12.15pm Record

Review – Building a Library Schubert's *Fantasy for Violin and Piano in C, D934*

12.15-1pm Music Matters

1-3pm Saturday Classics

3-4pm Sound of Cinema

Schoenberg in Hollywood and

the development of dodecaphonic (12-tone) film scores

4-5pm Jazz Record Requests

5-6.30pm Jazz Line-Up

6.30-10pm Opera on 3

from English National Opera, London.

Berg *Lulu*. Brenda Rae (Lulu), Willard White (Schigolch) et al. Orchestra of English National Opera/Wigglesworth

10pm-12 midnight

Hear and Now

12 midnight-1am

Geoffrey Smith's Jazz

8 SUNDAY

7-9am Breakfast

9am-12 noon Sunday Morning

12 noon-1pm Private Passions

Sarah Lucas, artist

1-2pm Lunchtime Concert

(rpt, from Wigmore Hall)

2-3pm The Early Music Show

Lucie Skeaping celebrates the 350th anniversary of Italian composer Antonio Lotti (born 5 January 1667)

3-4pm Choral Evensong (rpt)

4-5pm The Choir

5-5.30pm The Listening Service

5.30-6.45pm Words and Music

6.45-7.30pm Sunday Feature

Boulez and his rumble in the jungle. Robert Worby looks at the composer's visits to South America in the 1950s

7.30-9pm Radio 3 in Concert

from the European Broadcasting Union

9-10.30pm Drama on 3

Byron's *Manfred*

10.30pm-11.30pm

Early Music Late L'Arpeggiata

perform works by Cavalli, presented by Simon Heighes

9 MONDAY

6.30-9am Breakfast

9am-12 noon

Essential Classics

12 noon-1pm Composer of

the Week Sibelius the Finn

1-2pm Lunchtime Concert from Wigmore Hall, London. Byrd *Fantasia in A minor*, Pavan and Galliard, The Bells, Purcell *Suite in G, Z660*, *Ground in C minor*, ZD221, John Blow *Chaconne in FaUt*, Purcell *Suite in G minor*, Z661, *Suite in D*, Z667, *Ground in D minor*, ZD222.

Richard Egarr (harpsichord)

2-4.30pm Afternoon on 3

4.30-6.30pm In Tune

6.30-7.30pm Composer of

the Week Sibelius the Finn (rpt)

7.30-10pm Radio 3 in Concert

from the Barbican, London. Janáček *Jealousy*, Smetana *Má vlast – 'Vltava' and 'Šárka'*, Szymanowski *Violin Concerto No. 2*, Peter Eötvös *The Gilding of the Eagle in the Skies*, Janáček *Taras Bulba*. Tasmin Little (violin), BBC SO/Edward Gardner

10-10.45pm Music Matters (rpt)

10.45-11pm

The Essay Cornerstones

11pm-12.30am Jazz Now

10 TUESDAY

6.30-1pm As Monday 9 Jan

1-2pm Lunchtime Concert

2-4.30pm Afternoon on 3

4.30-6.30pm In Tune

6.30-7.30pm Composer of

the Week Sibelius the Finn (rpt)

7.30-10pm Radio 3 in Concert BBC Singers (tbc)
10-10.45pm Free Thinking
10.45-11pm The Essay

11 WEDNESDAY

6.30-1pm As Monday 9 Jan
1-2pm Lunchtime Concert
2-3.30pm Afternoon on 3
3.30-4.30pm Choral Evensong
 Live from Merton College, Oxford
4.30-6.30pm In Tune
6.30-7.30pm Composer of the Week Sibelius the Finn (rpt)
7.30-10pm Radio 3 in Concert
 from Trinity College, Cambridge.
 Bach *Mass in B minor*. Katherine Watson (soprano), Iestyn Davies (countertenor), Gwilym Bowen (tenor), Neal Davies (bass), Trinity College Choir, Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment
10-10.45pm Free Thinking
10.45-11pm The Essay



PRIVATE PASSIONS



Each week **Michael Berkeley** talks to a guest about their favourite music, one of whose choices are below



GRAYSON PERRY Artist

GLASS *Metamorphosis 2*
 Nicolas Horvath (piano)

'I went to see Godfrey Reggio's film *Koyaanisqatsi* (1982) which is based on Hopi Indian prophecies. It was my first encounter with Glass and I was completely addicted to the soundtrack. I went out and bought it and looked into his other works, including his operas and piano pieces. When I was making a time-lapse film, many years later, my first choice of music to accompany it was Glass and this was the piece I used.'

TCHAIKOVSKY *Violin Concerto in D, Op. 35*
 (1st mvt: *Allegro moderato*)

Anne-Sophie Mutter (violin), Berlin Philharmonic/Karajan
 'This record, the Tchaikovsky Violin Concerto, was on repeat when I was in my first year at college. It was on an old Dansette record player, covered in dust in the corner of the studio. Not many people would donate records to that pile because that would be the end of them! Many years later I was invited to the Proms and I sat down without looking at the programme. It was the first piece of music and I was in floods; it took me back 35 years.'

HANDEL 'Ombra mai fu' from *Xerxes*

Kathleen Ferrier (contralto), LSO/Malcolm Sargent
 'You can hear the class system of post-war Britain in Kathleen Ferrier's voice; that's what moves me. At one point I was addicted to old documentaries made at that time when even the poor people talked posh compared to now. There's a kind of decency and hope in that period.'

MARCELLO *Oboe Concerto in D minor* (2nd mvt: *Adagio*)

Nicholas Daniel (oboe), Peterborough String Orchestra
 'This is a fairly recent love of mine. There's something about the mood of this piece – and a passage at the end where it almost drops out – that really crushes me. I think it shows the beauty of music and the way that it can make us hold our breath.'

Private Passions is on Radio 3 every Sunday at 12 noon and is also available to download as a podcast.

12 THURSDAY

6.30-1pm As Monday 9 Jan
1-2pm Lunchtime Concert
2-4.30pm Afternoon on 3
4.30-6.30pm In Tune
6.30-7.30pm Composer of the Week Sibelius the Finn (rpt)
7.30-10pm Radio 3 in Concert (tbc)
10-10.45pm Free Thinking
10.45-11pm The Essay
11-12.30am Late Junction

13 FRIDAY

6.30-1pm As Monday 9 Jan
1-2pm Lunchtime Concert
2-4.30pm Afternoon on 3
4.30-6.30pm In Tune
6.30-7.30pm Composer of the Week Sibelius the Finn (rpt)
7.30-10pm Radio 3 in Concert
 live from Bridgewater Hall, Manchester. Ravel *Noctuelles* (arr. Stucky), Ravel *Oiseaux tristes*

(arr. Colin Matthews), Ravel *Vallée des cloches* (arr. Colin Matthews) – (world premiere), Ravel *Piano Concerto for the Left Hand*, Shostakovich *Symphony No. 8*. Jean-Efflam Bavouzet (piano), BBC Philharmonic/Nicholas Collon
10-10.45pm The Verb
10.45-11pm The Essay

14 SATURDAY

7-9am Breakfast
9am-12.15pm Record Review – Building a Library
 Tchaikovsky's *Symphony No. 4*, reviewed by Rob Cowan
12.15-1pm Music Matters
1-3pm Saturday Classics
3-4pm Sound of Cinema
4-5pm Jazz Record Requests
5-6.30pm Jazz Line-Up
6.30-10.30pm Opera on 3
 live from the Royal Opera House, London. Richard Strauss *Der Rosenkavalier*. Renée Fleming (Marschallin), Alice Coote (Octavian), Sophie Bevan (Sophie von Faninal) et al, Orchestra of the Royal Opera House/Andris Nelsons
10.30pm-12 midnight Hear and Now
12 midnight-1am Geoffrey Smith's Jazz

15 SUNDAY

7-9am Breakfast
9am-12 noon Sunday Morning
12 noon-1pm Private Passions
 Peter Robinson, writer
1-2pm Lunchtime Concert
 (rpt from Wigmore Hall)
2-3pm The Early Music Show
 Hannah French meets violinist and director Jeanne Lamon and discusses her association with Tafelmusik, the Canadian Baroque orchestra
3-4pm Choral Evensong (rpt)
4-5pm The Choir
5-5.30pm The Listening Service
5.30-6.45pm Words and Music
6.45-7.30pm Sunday Feature
 Apocalypse How
7.30-9pm Radio 3 in Concert
 from the European Broadcasting Union
9-10.30pm Drama on 3
 Ibsen's *Rosmerholm*, a new version by Frank McGuinness
10.30pm-11.30pm Early Music Late Hervé Niquet conducts Concert Spirituel, performing works by Vivaldi

16 MONDAY

6.30-9am Breakfast
9am-12 noon Essential Classics
12 noon-1pm Composer of the Week Beethoven
1-2pm Lunchtime Concert
 from Wigmore Hall, London.
 Bach *Goldberg Variations*, BWV 988. Beatrice Rana (piano)
2-4.30pm Afternoon on 3
4.30-6.30pm In Tune
6.30-7.30pm Composer of the Week Beethoven (rpt)
7.30-10pm Radio 3 in Concert
 from Wigmore Hall, London. JS Bach *Harpichord Concerto No. 7 in G minor*, BWV 1058 (from *Violin Concerto in A minor*, BWV 1041),



VITAL VIVALDI:
 violinist Adrian
 Chandler (18 January)

Telemann *Burlesque de Quixotte*, TWV55:G10, Bach *Harpichord Concerto No. 3 in D*, BWV 1054, Telemann *Suite in G* TWV55:G4 'Les nations anciens et modernes', JS Bach *Harpichord Concerto No. 1 in D minor*, BWV 1052. Kristian Bezuidenhout (harpichord), Arcangelo/Jonathan Cohen
10-10.45pm Music Matters (rpt)
10.45-11pm The Essay Simon Heffer on kitchen sink dramas
11pm-12.30am Jazz Now

17 TUESDAY

6.30-1pm As Monday 16 Jan
1-2pm Lunchtime Concert
2-4.30pm Afternoon on 3
4.30-6.30pm In Tune
6.30-7.30pm Composer of the Week Beethoven (rpt)
7.30-10pm Radio 3 in Concert (tba)
10-10.45pm Free Thinking
10.45-11pm The Essay
11-12.30am Late Junction

18 WEDNESDAY

6.30-1pm As Monday 16 Jan
1-2pm Lunchtime Concert
2-3.30pm Afternoon on 3
3.30-4.30pm Choral Evensong
 A 2011 archive recording from Bath Abbey, celebrating Peter King's 30 years as organist and music director
4.30-6.30pm In Tune
6.30-7.30pm Composer of the Week Beethoven (rpt)
7.30-10pm Radio 3 in Concert
 from St John's Smith Square.
 Vivaldi *Le Quattro Stagioni* (*The Four Seasons* – Manchester version: *Four Concertos for Violin, Strings and Continuo* from 'Il cimento dell'armonica e dell'inventione', Op. 8 Nos. 1-4). Adrian Chandler (violin), La Serenissima
10-10.45pm Free Thinking
10.45-11pm The Essay
11-12.30am Late Junction

19 THURSDAY

6.30-1pm As Monday 16 Jan
1-2pm Lunchtime Concert
2-4.30pm Afternoon on 3
4.30-6.45pm In Tune
6.45-7.45pm Composer of the Week Beethoven (rpt)
7.45-10pm Radio 3 in Concert
 live from the Barbican Hall, London. Mark-Anthony Turnage *Remembering 'In Memoriam Evan Scofield'* (world premiere), Mahler *Symphony No. 6*. London Symphony Orchestra/Simon Rattle
10-10.45pm Free Thinking
10.45-11pm The Essay

20 FRIDAY

6.30-1pm As Monday 16 Jan
1-2pm Lunchtime Concert
2-4.30pm Afternoon on 3
4.30-6.30pm In Tune
6.30-7.30pm Composer of the Week Beethoven (rpt)
7.30-10pm Radio 3 in Concert (tba)
10-10.45pm The Verb
10.45-11pm The Essay

21 SATURDAY

7-9am Breakfast
9am-12.15pm Record Review – Building a Library
 Beethoven's *Quartet in E Flat, Op. 127*, reviewed by Stephen Johnson
12.15-1pm Music Matters
1-3pm Saturday Classics
3-4pm Sound of Cinema
4-5pm Jazz Record Requests
5-6.30pm Jazz Line-Up
6.30-10pm Opera on 3
 from the Metropolitan Opera House, New York. Gounod *Roméo et Juliette*. Vittorio Grigolo (Roméo), Diana Damrau (Juliette) et al, Metropolitan Opera House Orchestra/Noseda
10pm-12 midnight Hear and Now
12 midnight-1am Geoffrey Smith's Jazz

22 SUNDAY

7-9am Breakfast
9am-12 noon Sunday Morning
12 noon-1pm Private Passions
 Tanita Tikaram, singer (rpt)
1-2pm Lunchtime Concert
 (rpt from Wigmore Hall)
2-3pm The Early Music Show
 Hannah French looks at Bach's
 Orchestral Suites, BWV 1066-1069
3-4pm Choral Evensong (rpt)
4-5pm The Choir
5-5.30pm The Listening Service
5.30-6.45pm Words and Music
 Music on the brink of destruction
7.30-9pm Radio 3 Live in Concert from the European
 Broadcasting Union
9-10.30pm Drama on 3
 Racine's *Andromaque*
10.30pm-11.30pm
Early Music Late Elin Manahan
 Thomas presents Camerata Bern
 and violinist Amandine Beyer,
 performing a selection of works by
 Rameau, Campa and Leclair

23 MONDAY

6.30-9am Breakfast
9am-12 noon
Essential Classics
12 noon-1pm Composer of the Week Rossini
1-2pm Lunchtime Concert
 from Wigmore Hall, London. Fauré
Mirages, Op. 113, André Caplet
Cinq ballades françaises de Paul
Fort, Honegger *Petit cours de*
morale, Poulenc *Deux mélodies sur*
des poèmes de Guillaume Apollinaire
Parisiana. Roderick Williams
 (baritone), Roger Vignoles (piano)
2-4.30pm Afternoon on 3
4.30-6.30pm In Tune
6.30-7.30pm Composer of the Week Rossini (rpt)
7.30-10pm Radio 3 in Concert
 from Bridgewater Hall, Manchester.
 Wagner *Tristan und Isolde* – *Prelude*
to Act I, Grieg *Piano Concerto in*
A minor, Op. 16, Elgar *Falstaff* –
Symphonic Study, Op. 68. Javier
 Perianes (piano), BBC Philharmonic/
 Sir Andrew Davis
10-10.45pm Music Matters (rpt)
10.45-11pm
 The Essay Gun culture
11pm-12.30am Jazz Now

24 TUESDAY

6.30-1pm As Monday 23 Jan
CHOICE 1-2pm
Lunchtime Concert,
 recorded as part of the Big
 Chamber Weekend, Saffron Hall
2-4.30pm Afternoon on 3
4.30-6.30pm In Tune
6.30-7.30pm Composer of the Week Rossini (rpt)
7.30-10pm
Radio 3 in Concert (tbc)
10-10.45pm Free Thinking
10.45-11pm The Essay

25 WEDNESDAY

6.30-9am Breakfast
9am-12 noon
Essential Classics
12 noon-1pm
Composer of the Week Rossini

1-2pm Lunchtime Concert,
 recorded as part of the
 Big Chamber Weekend, Saffron Hall
2-3.30pm Afternoon on 3
3.30-4.30pm Choral Vespers
 from Westminster Cathedral
4.30-6.30pm In Tune
6.30-7.30pm Composer of the Week Rossini (rpt)
CHOICE
7.30-10pm Radio 3 in Concert
 live from The Lighthouse,
 Poole. Prokofiev *Violin Concerto No.*
2 in G minor, Op. 63, Shostakovich
Symphony No. 8. Valeriy Sokolov
 (violin), Bournemouth Symphony
 Orchestra/Kirill Karabits
10-10.45pm Free Thinking
10.45-11pm The Essay

26 THURSDAY

6.30-1pm As Monday 23 Jan
1-2pm Lunchtime Concert,
 recorded as part of the Big Chamber
 Weekend, Saffron Hall
2-4.30pm Afternoon on 3
4.30-6.30pm In Tune
6.30-7.30pm Composer of the Week Rossini (rpt)
7.30-10pm Radio 3 in Concert
 live from City Halls, Glasgow.
 Dvořák *Cello Concerto in B minor*,
 Op. 104, Elgar *Symphony No. 1*.
 Steven Isserlis (cello), BBC Scottish
 Symphony Orchestra/Dausgaard
10-10.45pm Free Thinking
10.45-11pm The Essay

27 FRIDAY

6.30-1pm As Monday 23 Jan
1-2pm Lunchtime Concert,
 recorded as part of the Big
 Chamber Weekend, Saffron Hall
2-4.30pm Afternoon on 3
4.30-6pm In Tune
6-7pm Composer of the Week
 Rossini (rpt)
7.30-10pm Radio 3 in Concert
 live from City Halls, Glasgow. Dvořák
Legends Nos. 1-5, Op. 59, Mozart
Piano Concerto No. 21 in C, K467,
 Dvořák *Legends Nos. 6-10*, Op.
 59, Mozart *Piano Concerto No. 27*
in B Flat, K595. Maria João Pires
 (piano), Scottish CO/Robin Ticciati
10-10.45pm The Verb
10.45-11pm The Essay

28 SATURDAY

7-9am Breakfast
9am-12.15pm Record Review
 – Building a Library (tbc)
12.15-1pm Music Matters
1-3pm Saturday Classics
3-4pm Sound of Cinema
4-5pm Jazz Record Requests
5-6.30pm Jazz Line-Up
6.30-9pm Opera on 3 from City
 Halls, Glasgow. Birtwistle's *The Last*
Supper (semi-staged performance).
 Roderick Williams (Christ), John
 Daszak (Judas) et al, BBC Singers,
 BBC Scottish SO/Martyn Brabbins
10pm-12 midnight
Hear and Now
12 midnight-1am
 Geoffrey Smith's Jazz

29 SUNDAY

7-9am Breakfast
9am-12 noon Sunday Morning

12 noon-1pm Private Passions
1-2pm Lunchtime Concert
 (rpt, from Wigmore Hall)
2-3pm The Early Music Show
 (rpt) Music of the English royal courts,
 from Henry VIII to George III
3-4pm Choral Evensong (rpt)
4-5pm The Choir
5-5.30pm The Listening Service
5.30-6.45pm Words and Music
6.45-7.30pm Sunday Feature
7.30-9pm Radio 3 in Concert
 from the European Broadcasting Union
9-10.30pm Drama on 3
10.30pm-11.30pm
Early Music Late A concert of
 medieval Cypriot antiphons given
 by the Huelgas Ensemble

30 MONDAY

6.30-9am Breakfast
9am-12 noon
Essential Classics
12 noon-1pm
Composer of the Week Britten
1-2pm Lunchtime Concert from
 Wigmore Hall. James Maynard *New*
work, Schumann *Fantasiestücke*,
 Op. 73, Axel Jørgensen *Romance*,
 Op. 21, Duparc *La vie antérieure*,
 Rachmaninov *Cello Sonata in G minor*,
 Op. 19 – *III Andante*, Paul Hindemith
Sonata for trombone and piano, Arthur
 Pryor *Annie Laurie*. Peter Moore
 (trombone), James Baillieu (piano)
2-4.30pm Afternoon on 3
4.30-6.30pm In Tune
6.30-7.30pm Composer of the Week Britten (rpt)
7.30-10pm Radio 3 in Concert
 from St David's Hall, Cardiff. Bruckner
Ave Maria, *Christus factus est*, *Os justi*,
Locus iste, Mahler *Symphony No. 6*.
 BBC National Chorus of Wales/Adrian
 Partington, BBC NOW/Søndergård
10-10.45pm Music Matters (rpt)
10.45-11pm The Essay
11pm-12.30am Jazz Now

31 TUESDAY

6.30-1pm As Monday 30 Jan
1-2pm Lunchtime Concert
2-4.30pm Afternoon on 3
4.30-6.30pm In Tune
6.30-7.30pm Composer of the Week Britten (rpt)
7.30-10pm Radio 3 in Concert
10-10.45pm Free Thinking
10.45-11pm The Essay

Highlights on Radio 4
 this month include
 the following series:

Desert Island Discs – 75th
 anniversary Back in January
 1942, *Desert Island Discs* was
 first broadcast, introduced by
 Eric Coates's gull-filled theme *By*
The Sleepy Lagoon. The well-loved
 format, devised by Roy Plomley,
 remains largely unchanged and
 some of classical music's greatest
 names have washed up on the list
 of past 'castaways'. These include
 composers (Walton and Bliss), opera
 stars (Renée Fleming and Dame
 Janet Baker) and conductors (André
 Previn and Andrew Davis). Details of
 Kirsty Young's anniversary guests
 will be released nearer the date.
Sunday 29 January, 11.15am

WEEKLY TV AND RADIO HIGHLIGHTS

On our website each week we
 pick the best of the classical
 music programmes on radio,
 TV and iPlayer. So to plan your
 weekly listening and viewing,
 head to classical-music.com or
 sign up to our weekly newsletter
 to be sent information about
 the week's classical programmes
 directly to your inbox.



BBC MUSIC TV HIGHLIGHTS



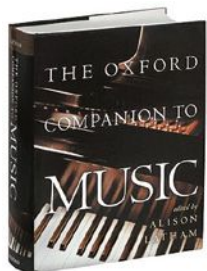
VENEZUELA TO VIENNA:
 Gustavo Dudamel helms
 the New Year festivities

NEW YEAR'S DAY IN VIENNA

As Radio 3 begins the New Year with a survey of the
 Second Viennese School, it also pays a visit to the
 Austrian capital (joining in the fun with BBC TV)
 for the annual celebration of 'waltz king' Johann
 Strauss II and family. This year's New Year's Concert
 welcomes Venezuelan conductor Gustavo Dudamel
 to the podium to conduct the Vienna Philharmonic.
 At just 35, Dudamel is the youngest conductor to
 have appeared in the 75-year history of the concerts.
 Up until 1980 the concert was only conducted
 by Austrian conductors, with the American Lorin
 Maazel being the first to break the tradition.

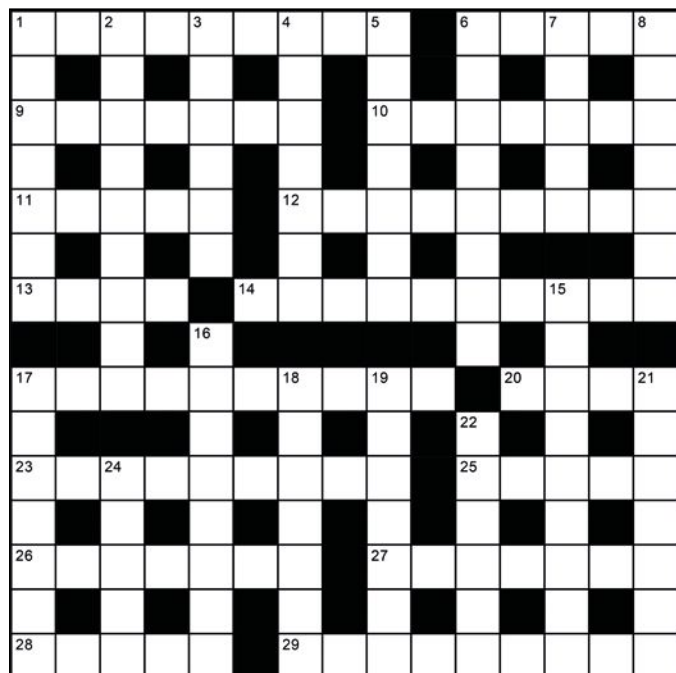
BBC Two will be covering all the musical action
 from the glittering Golden Hall of the Musikverein,
 in a traditional programme packed with waltzes,
 polkas and mazurkas, including the *The Blue*
Danube waltz and Johann Strauss I's *The Radetzky*
March. Each year the concert attracts more than
 50 million viewers from over 90 countries.
BBC Two; New Year's Concert, 1 Jan, 11.15am

QUIZ ANSWERS from p94
 1. 'From the New World'
 2. King Edward VII
 3. Potatoes (Vivaldi; New; King
 Edward; Jersey Royal; Charlotte;
 Marm's Piper; Golden Wonder; Picasso;
 Melody).
 4. Pablo Picasso
 5. Charlotte
 6. Pled Piper
 7. The Golden Cockerel



January prize crossword No. 303

The first correct solution of our monthly crossword to be picked at random will win a copy of *The Oxford Companion to Music* worth £40 (available at bookstores or www.oup.co.uk). Send your answers to: *BBC Music Magazine*, Crossword 303, PO Box 501, Leicester, LE94 0AA to arrive by 26 January 2017 (solution in our April 2017 issue). *Crossword set by Paul Henderson*



ACROSS

- 1 Title role startled ladies and men (9)
- 6 This encompasses a title role (5)
- 9 Mars vehicle, perhaps, with inscribed line from Mahlerian folk song (7)
- 10 Appear on stage – mostly jaunty appearance (7)
- 11 Angry outburst suppressed by guitarist or mandolinist (5)
- 12 Auditorium property initially admirable – most of cost is cut, sadly (9)
- 13 A capital orchestra as well (4)
- 14 Scottish diva, maddened dame angry about conductor, ultimately (4,6)
- 17 An instant to pester Sargent? (5,5)
- 20 French composer filling cathedral a lot (4)
- 23 Wounds a celesta badly, involving a bit of repair (9)
- 25 Alto getting help translating Hebrew character (5)
- 26 Library brought in original material reflecting French composer (7)
- 27 Fond of partner recalling half of *Aida* while in Luxor possibly (7)
- 28 Fellow taking the stage in title role (5)
- 29 Looking back – time amidst LSO again stimulated (9)

DOWN

- 1 Meal is arranged to accommodate Mozart's first tune (7)
- 2 Excited lad knows a harpsichordist (9)
- 3 Title role almost completely embraced by a few people (6)
- 4 Rock band, leading group, appearing in dreadful rain (7)
- 5 International group with fake, but mellifluous sound (7)
- 6 A creation of Stravinsky, as is Rite, possibly (8)
- 7 Salad dressing found in a central section of violin (5)

- 8 British composer is elevating moderately quiet song? Not entirely (7)
- 15 Nonet forte picked up in arrangement of Gade – it's very loud (9)
- 16 Revolutionary source of friction in title role (8)
- 17 Howard Shore's area – arranging of mild opening to movie (7)
- 18 Craftsman upset Sinatra (7)
- 19 Saves others missing latest indications to start playing (7)
- 21 Thomas heroine? I help out between start and end of opera (7)
- 22 Contribution to scena to mar Victor Herbert opera (6)
- 24 Company policy mostly revealed by conductor Davis? (5)

NOVEMBER SOLUTION NO. 300



NOVEMBER WINNER John Kirk, Greenock

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THE MUSIC QUIZ

There's something rather earthy about this month's quiz...

1. Which Italian composer was nicknamed *Il Prete Rosso* ('The Red Priest') due to the colour of his hair?
2. How did Dvořák subtitle his Ninth Symphony, written while he was director of New York's National Conservatory of Music of America from 1892-5?
3. For whose coronation at Westminster Abbey in 1902 did Hubert Parry compose the choral anthem 'I Was Glad', a work that has been sung at British coronations ever since?
4. On which British island, complete with its own opera house, is the expulsion of German forces in 1944 marked each May by the Liberation International Music Festival?

PICTURE THIS

5. Played here by mezzo Joyce DiDonato, name the girl who, married to Albert, drives the infatuated eponymous hero to suicide in Massenet's *Werther*.



6. Can you name the BBC Radio 3 programme that, hosted by early music specialist David Munrow from 1971-6, was known and loved for its accessible approach to a wide range of music?
7. Which 1907 opera by Rimsky-Korsakov ends when Tsar Dodon is killed by the very creature he had obtained to protect him?
8. Which famous artist designed the sets and costumes for the first ever productions of Satie's *Parade* (1917), Falla's *Three-cornered hat* (1919) and Stravinsky's *Pulcinella* (1920)?
9. Founded in 1926 as a publication for dance band musicians, which British journal went on to cover rock and pop music until its closure in 2000?
10. Now it's time for the fun bit. Taking one or two words from each answer so far, what is the theme that links this month's quiz?

See p93 for answers

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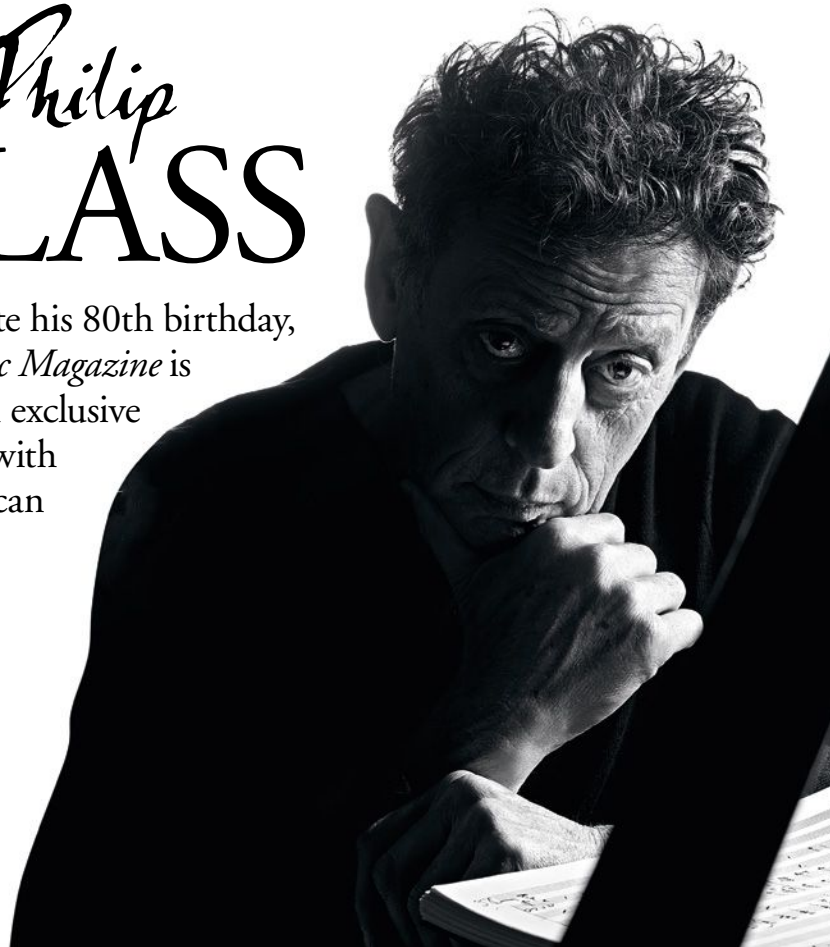


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Do Re Mi

Rick Jones ponders why the curious tonic sol-fa notation system has endured for so long

BBC Music Magazine Awards – the nominations!

It's that time of year... We present the shortlisted recordings for the awards next April

Maria João Pires

Jeremy Pound travels to northern Italy for a masterclass with the brilliant Portuguese pianist

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Edward Gardner *conductor*

I was a chorister at Gloucester Cathedral and sang in that wonderful building for a couple of hours every day – choral and organ music were a big part of my life. I remember being obsessed with **MESSIAEN**, which is weird for a kid of eight. I made my parents drive from a holiday in Brittany to where he was organist at La Trinité in Paris – and he wasn't there. To this day I've never lived it down, that five-hour, sweaty journey. Messiaen's *Vingt Regards* was a piece that blew me away back then. His wife Yvonne Loriod performed it at the Queen Elizabeth Hall at the time. She played it as if it were the most mainstream repertoire you could imagine, with so much love and beauty.

I went on to be a choral scholar at King's College, Cambridge and I remember the first time I sang in that choir with a period orchestra. It was **BACH**'s *St Matthew Passion* with the Brandenburg Consort – that beautiful teeming sound of the strings and the pungent wind at the beginning of that great E minor chorus took my breath away. It didn't know that music-making like that existed. I'd never been involved with a piece of that scale before, something with such a massive arc. To commune with that scale and level of reflection probably set me up for Wagner operas later on.

Early on at university, I was looking to broaden my musical experience. There was a good second-hand CD store in the marketplace in Cambridge and I came across the Carlos Kleiber recording of **WAGNER**'s *Tristan* from Bayreuth, which I love to this day. Although Kleiber doesn't make himself central to the music, he conducts it with such ardour and vehemence when it needs it. It's on an extremely high emotional level, point to point, but the genius of him is that he can combine that with a great sweep. The trouble with listening to Kleiber is that he makes you want to change career because you know you're a mere mortal in the face of greatness. There's a video of him conducting Strauss's *Der Rosenkavalier* in Vienna, and I can only watch 20 minutes before I have to switch it off...

André Previn's recording of **WALTON**'s *Symphony No. 1* with the London Symphony



ENGLISH FAÇADE:
'there's an underlying
anguish in Walton'

EDWARD GARDNER WAS born in 1974 in Gloucester. After Eton and Cambridge, he studied conducting at the Royal Academy, was a répétiteur at the Salzburg Festival, then assistant to Mark Elder at the Hallé for three years from 2004. That year, he also became music director of Glyndebourne on Tour and in 2006 was made music director of English National Opera. Gardner is now principal conductor of the Bergen Philharmonic and tours the UK with them in Jan. Visit harmonien.no/english

Orchestra is one that some conductor friends I was studying at the Academy with put me on to. I still remember how the coda of that first movement sounds and the way the LSO and the timpanist just tear into that music, I couldn't believe the sound. It feels volcanic and elemental – in the context of British music, I wonder how that piece would have felt at that time. It's Beethovenian in its anger and angst, and jubilation of the last movement. There's an underlying anguish in so much of Walton's music; that first movement is still one of the great symphonic movements for me.

BRITTEN's *Sinfonia da Requiem* has a big place in my life. The composer's own

performance of it made me fall in love with his music. Studying his scores, you can feel quite constricted because he basically tells you what to do with every note. A lot of the time you're just relaying what's on the page; it can almost feel anti-interpreted. But when you hear him conduct you realise that he allowed himself to be emotionally free in a way that he didn't when he was writing it down. That was a real eye-opener for me. It made me more confident about conducting his music because he was such a performer and committed to the drama. His performances live way beyond the written note. Doing *Peter Grimes* was one of the high points of my time at ENO. The cast was world-class, and my God it was chilling. It was one of the great privileges of my career. ■

Interview by Oliver Condy

EDWARD GARDNER MUSIC CHOICE



Messiaen
Vingt Regards
Yvonne Loriod (piano)
Apex 2564699865



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St Matthew Passion
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Wagner
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